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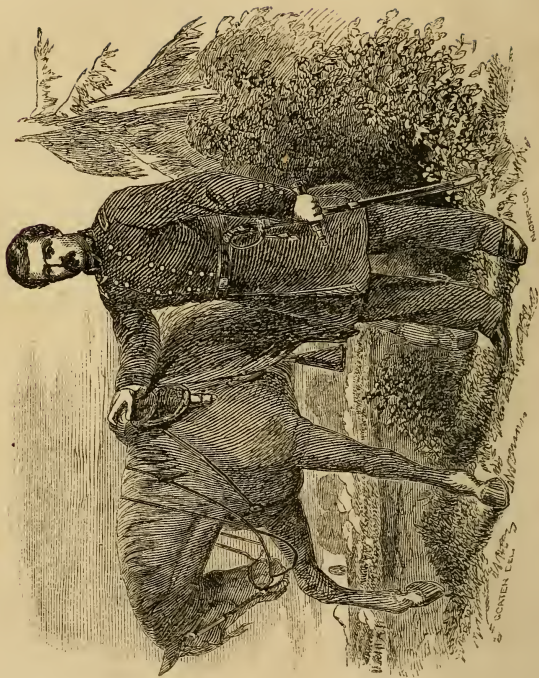
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P. M. Higgins



THE LIFE

*P. H. G. Book*  
OF  
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MAJ.-GEN. GEO. B. McCLELLAN,

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF U. S. A.

INCLUDING SERVICES IN MEXICO, ON THE RED RIVER EX-  
PLORATION EXPEDITION, ON THE PACIFIC RAILWAY  
SURVEY, ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, ETC.

*G. J. Victor*

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BY LOUIS LEGRAND, M. D. *and*

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Book

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE preparation of this life of General McClellan was called for by the fact that no biography of our General-in-Chief has, thus far, been given to the public other than meager newspaper sketches.

The General is, as yet, a young man; but, contrary to the prevailing impression, he has had a wide experience in fields best adapted to fit him for the position to which fate and the voice of his country has called him. What that experience has been these pages will testify.

In the preparation of our work we have been assisted much by the kindness of Mr. Van Nostrand, publisher of military books, New York, who has placed at our disposal most of the works (several of them quite generally unavailable) which furnished the data for this little volume. To Major (now Colonel) Delafield and others we are also much indebted for hints and memoranda of a valuable character.

This biography, we trust, will be found to answer the demand for the *story* of his life—in which all classes are now so greatly interested.

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*George B. McClellan*  
*Book 6 - 1.0.1*

# THE LIFE OF MAJ.-GEN. GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY—BIRTH—EDUCATION AT WEST POINT—SERVICES IN MEXICO—  
BATTLES OF VERA CRUZ, CERRO GORDO, CONTRERAS, CHERUBUSCO, MOLINO  
DEL REY, CHAPULTEPEC AND MEXICO—HONORS WON.

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN is said to be descended of Scotch ancestry. A writer in the "Scottish American Journal" says:—"By accounts I have lately received from Kircudbright, I learn that General McClellan is a descendant of a very ancient and illustrious Galloway family—the McClellans of Kircudbright and Bombie, allied to the ancient 'Knights of Lochinvar.' The family were ennobled by Charles I, in 1633, the then representative, Sir Robert McClellan of Bombie, being created a peer under the title of Lord Kircudbright. The last lord of that name died about thirty years ago, in rather reduced circumstances, leaving no issue. The title is now extinct. The ruins of the old family castle now form the most conspicuous object in the ancient burg of Kircudbright, on the banks of the river Dee. Many of the deeds of the McClellans are still recounted in the legendary lore of the district. The name of McClellan has been always associated with all that is noble, patriotic and daring, and I am proud to think that in the person of the American scion it is still so. Sir William McClellan, an ancestor of the above family, also fell at Flodden. In point of fact, Camden Grey McClellan, tenth Baron Kircudbright, in the peerage of Scotland, died in 1832, when, for want of a male heir, the title became extinct. His widow survives. She was daughter of the late Colonel Thomas Gorges. Lord Kircudbright left an only daughter, Camden Elizabeth, who was married in 1832, shortly before her father's death, to James Staunton Lambert, who also survives."

He is the son of the late eminent surgeon, Dr. George McClellan, of Philadelphia, in which city he was born, December 3d, 1826. He was educated, to the age of sixteen, in the best schools of the city; and, showing such a decided leaning, by taste and temperament, to the profession of arms, was chosen as the West Point appointee for his congressional district—entering the academy in 1842. His proficiency was such as at once to mark him for success. He pursued the entire course, graduating June 30th, 1846, as second in his class—his only superior being Charles S. Stewart.\*

The Mexican war then being in progress, the young graduate was commissioned Second Lieutenant of Sappers and Miners, and immediately detailed to duty in General Taylor's army. His first service was on the march to Vittoria, from Matamoras, as pioneer. The service required was an arduous one. The opening of roads, the closing of fords, the clearing of encampments tasked his great physical energy to its utmost. The company was a fine one and soon became one of the most noted for efficiency and courage in the army. The same pioneer duty was performed on the route to Tampico, in Tamaulipas province, one of the principal seaports of the State. Commodore Perry anticipated the advance of the American Army of Invasion by taking possession of the place, which, however, was turned over to the land forces and held by them as a base of operations (January 26th, 1847).

General Scott assumed the command in chief of the Mexican campaign under instructions dated November 23d, 1846. The island of Lobos, between Tampico and Vera Cruz, was chosen for the rendezvous of the forces, land and naval, destined for the assault on Vera Cruz. McClellan's company was drawn into the new Army of Invasion, and landed on the beach among those troops first thrown forward for the investment of Vera Cruz. The company was assigned to General Worth's division, and from the hour of its landing up to the occupation of the city rendered most arduous and valuable service.

\* Among those graduating with him we may mention Charles E. Blunt, now Captain of Engineers; John G. Foster, now Captain of Engineers, and was second in command at Fort Sumter; Edward C. Boynton, now Adjutant and Quartermaster at West Point; Trueman Seymour, Captain of Artillery—was in Fort Sumter during the siege; George Stoneman, now General of Volunteers (Cavalry); Cadmus M. Wilcox, now Brigadier-General in the rebel army.

Everywhere lines were to be opened, trenches to be marked out, batteries to be placed, paths to be defined for the reconnoissances—to all of which duties the company was assigned until almost exhausted from its ceaseless toils. “The best men for the sternest duty,” was the maxim of war which prevailed in the choice of the favorite company for the pioneer service in that memorable investment of one of the best fortified cities on the American continent.\* Colonel Totten, Chief of Engineers, in his report mentions the name of G. B. McClellan among those officers rendering efficient services. He thus referred to the nature of the duty performed by the engineers, to which McClellan’s company was detailed:—

“If there be any thing in the position, form, and arrangement of the trenches and batteries, or in the manner of their execution, worthy of commendation, it is due to the ability, devotion, and unremitting zeal of these officers. By extraordinary and unsparing efforts they were enabled, few as they were, to accomplish the work of many; and, so far as your (Scott’s) operations before this city depended on labors peculiar to their corps, no words of mine can overrate their services.”

It is one of the good results of a West Point education that it not only qualifies its men but *distributes* them with unerring sagacity to those branches of the service for which they are peculiarly fitted. The engineer corps is comprised solely of the most superior students—those taking the highest places in their class. The results of the investment of Vera Cruz was a test of the efficiency of the training and education received at West Point. That academy, caviled at much by a certain class of civilians who deem military knowledge as easily won as a militia commission, is the very heart and head of our military body. The militia (or volunteer) system may be the great executive *power*, but West Point science and precision are the directing agents.

After the occupation of Vera Cruz the onward march to the Mexican capital was commenced. The heights of Cerro Gordo were bristling with Mexican batteries. Their position was one of great strength. Only by outflanking and a

\* For the particulars of this investment and siege, see “Life of General Scott”—Dime Biographical Series—pp. 79–82.

simultaneous front assault of a bloody character could the American commander open the way. Twigg's division, on the advance, came up with the enemy April 11th. He determined upon an assault on the 13th, after a very careful reconnoissance (on the 12th) by the engineers—McClellan, Beauregard and Lee being of the number detailed; but General Patterson, second in command, preferred to await the coming up of General Scott. The Commander-in-Chief arrived with the reserves, on the 14th, and immediately made a second very thorough personal reconnoissance, accompanied by the engineers. As stated in Victor's "Life of Scott:—

"His keen eye caught the full strength of the most admirably disposed enemy, and his ingenuity was tasked to outflank those impregnable positions. It was resolved to cut a road around the base of the mountain—thus to approach the Mexican lines from the flank and rear. Only two days were consumed in this most arduous and surprising undertaking, which was not discovered by the enemy until its completion, on the 17th, when they instantly opened a heavy fire of grape and musketry on the laborers."

In this labor McClellan was engaged, scarcely sparing an hour for needful rest. Captain Lee and Lieutenant Beauregard (afterward Generals in the Confederate army) were his superiors in command, but, it is said, scarcely proved his superior in skill or energy. Scott, in his report of the final engagement (Report No. 4, Executive Document No. I., 1847) says:—

"The *tierra caliente*, or low level, terminates at *Plan del Rio*, the site of the American camp, from which the road ascends immediately, in a long circuit, among lofty hills, whose commanding points had all been fortified and garrisoned by the enemy. His right, intrenched, rested on a precipice overhanging an impassable ravine that forms the bed of the stream; and his intrenchments extended continuously to the road, on which was placed a formidable battery. On the other side, the lofty and difficult height of Cerro Gordo commanded the approaches in all directions. The main body of the Mexican army was encamped on level ground with a battery of five pieces, half a mile in rear of that height toward Jalapa. Resolving, if possible, to turn the enemy's left, and

attack in the rear, while menacing or engaging in front, I caused daily reconnoissances to be pushed, with a view of finding a route for a force to debouch on the Jalapa road and cut off retreat."

The result was the construction of the road referred to, by the sappers and miners, and a large assisting force from the ranks. Its plan and construction not only reflected honorably on the commanding General's sagacity, but again demonstrated the benefits of a West Point training. It is not too much to say the road never could have been constructed in the absence of those accomplished engineers.\*

General Scott, in his report, complimented Lieutenant McClellan, among others, for able assistance. The Lieutenant shared the honors of the final conflict. Detailed, along with Lieutenant Tower, to General Pillow's division, he received the acknowledgment of that commander for zeal and activity in the discharge of his duties. Pillow's brigade was given the enemy's right, in the general assault, but was repulsed, with heavy loss. General La Vega, the Mexican commander of that position, was a man of iron nerve, and, being most admirably disposed, was able to retain his place until the Americans, having carried the center and left, pressed upon his rear, thus compelling his surrender. His battery was found to be composed of bronze guns—several of them old Spanish pieces of historical interest. They were afterward sent home as trophies of the bloody field.

In the progress to Mexico the sappers and miners were ever on the advance, performing arduous and dangerous duty. The march of that small host into the heart of an enemy's country, every available point being fortified, only finds its parallel in the invasion of the same soil by the Spaniard of the sixteenth century. But his foes were barbarians, untutored in the art of war, readily imposed upon and easily managed; while Scott's foes were the descendants of those early conquerors—were skilled in war, rich in resources, countless in numbers and led by Generals of tried valor and experience. With ten thousand men—three-fourths of them volunteers then seeing service for the first time—cut off from

\* For a full account of the battle of Cerro Gordo, see "Life of Winfield Scott"—Dime Biographical Series—pp. 83, 84.

supplies, encountering almost impregnable fastnesses every few leagues of the way, Scott slowly but surely forced his foes into their last strongholds around their beloved capital, there to add to his own and his country's glory by a victory which finds no parallel in the annals of modern warfare. The secret of his success lay, first, in the invincible will of his men, whose confidence in their leaders was perfect; and, second, in the ability with which he was seconded by his officers. None rendered more responsible duty, nor added more to the glory of the campaign, than the engineer corps, of which McClellan soon became a leading and trusted member.

The approach to the city of Mexico, over the national causeway, was found to be so full of hazard, and so nearly impracticable, that Scott again had to resort to his matchless strategy. He conceived the idea of striking the city from the south instead of the east—a stroke as unexpected by the enemy as a thunderbolt from heaven. The American advance (Twigg's division) arrived at Ayotla, near the Lake Chalco, August 11th, 1847, and was rapidly followed by the divisions of Worth, Pillow and Quitman, which took positions around the head of the lake. A very bold reconnoiter, August 12th, proved that the Mexicans were almost impregnable in front. Scott surprised his officers by expressing his determination to pass to the *south* of Lakes Chalco and Xochimilico, to reach the Acapulco approach to the capital. This remarkable movement (planned, it is said, by the Commander-in-Chief in Washington, before his departure, but secretly kept even from his staff) was executed August 15th and 16th. The way was cleared by the pioneers, Worth's division being on the advance. The route lay over an almost pathless country, close along the highlands facing the lakes. San Augustin, on the Acapulco road, was reached on the evening of August 16th, to the consternation of the Mexicans, who now saw themselves outflanked and their capital open to the American forces. They immediately, however, prepared to dispute every inch of the seven miles intervening, and with exceeding rapidity fortified each commanding position in a strongly defensible manner. At Contreras heights, San Antonio, Cherubusco, were very formidable defenses, while the Mexican army, thirty thousand strong, occupied the field before the city. Behind them lay

the heights of Chapultepec, a perfect Gibraltar of strength, commanding the plain around and the city itself. The city was circled by strong masonry with all the approaches over the causeways very heavily guarded. The Americans were forced to carry each of those positions. It was a Herculean undertaking for a force of five thousand men;\* but it was done.

In the four weeks' campaign which followed, the engineers were detailed to almost unceasing duty. Ever on the reconnaissance, or in locating *points d'appui* of the day, in disposing the troops, or in piloting them into the field, they were necessarily everywhere, covering the entire section of operations by their ceaseless movements. Each division had its representation from the engineer corps, depending largely upon their judgment in the disposition for action.

It was determined by Scott to push on to the Mexican capital by the Acapulco road, leading directly north from San Augustin through San Antonio. A reconnoiter by the engineers showed the latter place to be peculiarly situated for defense. It was to be approached only by a causeway, bounded upon the eastern side by an impassable morass, while upon the west lay the *pedregal*, or field of lava, a section of country which seemed to have been showered down from the heavens, so utterly chaotic and disordered was its character. It resembled, in its impassability, the ice-packs of the arctic regions. A man could scarcely pick his way through it. To horses and guns it bid defiance. The causeway was fortified in a series of heavy batteries, which would sweep away an approaching enemy like wheat before a whirlwind. Scott again resorted to his favorite strategy by resolving to outflank it.

To the left of this field of lava ran another highway reaching to the capital. This was discovered to be very strongly fortified at Contreras heights, which General Valencia held with a heavy force, while, along the highway, the Mexicans were discovered to be gathering in immense numbers. Worth being ordered to *feint* on San Antonio, the best strength of

\* Scott's force at the final assault, was reduced to about five thousand. Sickness and extraordinary service had disabled many; many were required to garrison the several conquered positions; while the list of wounded and killed was large in proportion to the number engaged, but truly small considering the ends achieved.

the American army was thrown upon Contreras. After the first demonstrations by Pillow's and Twiggs' divisions, it became evident that Contreras must fall by strategy rather than by an assault from the lava-guarded front, where neither guns nor men could be maneuvered. The first attack by Twiggs was made on the afternoon of the 19th. At nightfall the troops were drawn off, and, during the darkness, made their way to the several positions chosen for the front and flank assaults. These were made early on the morning of the 20th (August). From the "Life of Scott" we may quote:—

"The night was very dark, wet and chilling, and the march over that field of stones was extremely painful; but it was made, in good order and in great silence. By midnight the brigades of Smith, Riley and Shields, and Ransom's regulars, had obtained their position, and there they stood in the drenching rain, chilled to the very marrow, until three o'clock, A. M. (on the 20th) when the first gray streak of light allowed them to move. Riley, Cadwallader and Smith defiled their men into the rear of the enemy's batteries, through a ravine, which so covered their approach that they came to a halt almost within leaping distance of the Mexican guns. All being ready, the word '*charge!*' broke the stillness of the morning. The Mexicans were completely surprised—all their attention having been given to the front and southern approaches, from whence Scott had made his first demonstration the previous afternoon. The struggle was brief, but extremely bloody, for the Spaniards fought with the desperation of despair. Valencia's entire columns soon were leaping from the embankments, flying toward the city. But Shields, with his volunteers, was ready on the highway, and caught the columns as they passed in the net-work of a terrible cross-fire. The victory was complete. Scott reported as the results of the affair:—'One road to the capital opened; 700 of the enemy killed; 813 prisoners, including, among 88 officers, 4 Generals,\* 22 pieces of brass ordnance, half of large caliber; thousands of small-arms and accouterments; an immense quantity of shot, shells, powder and cartridges; 700 pack-mules, etc., etc., all in our hands.'"

\* Salas, Mendoza, García, and Guadalupe.

In this important and well-earned victory, McClellan acted a brilliant part. Detailed to Twiggs' division, he led it into battle on the 19th. Twiggs said, in his report:—"Captain McClellan, of the topographical engineers, and Lieutenant McClellan, of the engineers proper, was sent in advance to reconnoiter (on the 19th) with a view of placing our batteries. They were soon stopped by one of the enemy's pickets and were compelled to return, each having his horse shot." The advance was then pressed, and Magruder's light guns were soon in full play on the intrenched stronghold of Valencia. Twiggs recommended for gallant services (on the 19th), among others, Lieutenants Beauregard, McClellan, Foster and others, and further said:—

"Lieutenant G. B. McClellan, after Lieutenant Callender was wounded, took charge of and managed the howitzer battery with judgment and success, until it became so disabled as to require shelter. For Lieutenant McClellan's efficiency and gallantry in this affair, I present his name for the favorable consideration of the General-in-Chief."

Securing the camp of Valencia, after its capture on the morning of August 20th, Twiggs' division pushed on toward the city, and, after several minor encounters with the flying enemy, was, at length, stopped at Cherubusco, by the strongly intrenched Mexicans. A reconnoissance by Lieutenants Stevens and McClellan discovered the bridge spanning the river and approached by the highway, over a deep morass, to be protected by a well-constructed *tête du pont*, or bridge head, composed of bastions with flanking curtains, thus offering a formidable face. Its guns swept every inch of the approach over the causeway. In the village, a large and solidly built church was fortified by a line of earth-works, and by an inner face-wall of masonry. In these admirable positions the Mexicans, in great force, were prepared to dispute the onward march of the conquering North Americans. If Cherubusco should be lost the city walls would then only stand between the two armies. Against the church, piloted by McClellan and Stevens, Twiggs precipitated his entire strength, while Worth, having carried San Antonio, came up on the Acapulco causeway, to the right, to press the *tête du pont*. To the far left, Generals Shields and Pierce were closing, in furious

conflict, with the Mexican field right, where Santa Anna commanded in person.

These *battles* of Cherubusco were bloody affairs, but were executed with a heroism before which no strength of position or numbers of the enemy could stand. Scott's eagle eye watched over and directed the three simultaneous conflicts. He knew his men; and victory again crowned the United States arms. The church and outworks capitulated, but not until the *tête du pont* had been carried by the impetuous bayonets of Worth's splendid infantry after his artillery had made severe breaches in the works. The bridge bastions being won, its guns were turned upon the church, against which Twiggs still was thundering with his infantry and artillery. The strong walls of the edifice could not withstand this cross-fire, and Twiggs' men were soon within the position—its masters. To the left the fight was then raging with great fury.

"Shields had conducted his men to a stern battle-field. Santa Anna in person commanded the field forces, to the west and rear of the bridge and church, 7,000 strong, nearly one-half cavalry. The volunteers of New York and South Carolina were, side by side, led on to the charge. Whole companies were decimated, and leader after leader disappeared from the front of the undaunted brigades. Shields and Pierce and the gallant Butler rode everywhere over the crimson field. Butler fell, Pierce fainted from exhaustion, and Shields alone led the battle front. The invincible Rifles came to his aid, then Harney with his splendid cavalry. Finally Worth's and Pillow's men, having passed the bridge, rushed on over the highway to the conflict, but it was won:—the enemy was flying before Shields' thoroughly infuriated ranks, and Captain Kearney, dashing through the victorious columns with his dragoons, rode down the Mexicans, up to the very gates of the city.

"Thus closed the day's action. A momentous day it was for American arms. Five desperate conflicts—two long, running fights—a midnight march in rain and cold—a day of hurrying advance:—surely the troops had earned repose. Alas! many had won a sleep which no battle alarums would ever disturb.

"The recall was sounded. Troops bivouacked on the field of battle—each division on its own conquered position. The wounded were borne to the church, now the hospital; the dead were buried by the fitful glare of camp-fires, while volleys fired over graves broke the night stillness with their painful dirges. By midnight all was hushed into repose. Scott alone seemed not to sleep. His commanding form was seen gliding everywhere through the gloom, like a good spirit, watching over his children. Well he might walk the battlefield, for what was to be the fate of the morrow?"

McClellan acted a distinguishing part in this most remarkable day's work. He was everywhere on the field where duty led, performing his part with a coolness and discretion which proved that his nature was strung for conflict.

For his services on the 20th, McClellan was breveted First Lieutenant of Engineers. He well deserved the thanks freely bestowed by the commanding General, and the rank conferred by the Commander-in-Chief.

The city lay in view before the American host. All seemed lost to the Mexican cause; yet, the subtle and unscrupulous Santa Anna hoped, by his almost matchless intrigue, still to crush his foe, or, at least, to retrieve his unqualified and dishonorable defeats. He asked and obtained a truce—the British Consul-General being chosen as the emissary of the Mexican authorities. An armistice was consented to by Scott with the express understanding that it was only to give time to make a treaty of peace. The usual bad faith of the Mexicans prevailed to prevent the consummation of the treaty. The time allotted (September 7th) expired and no treaty had been made. Scott took final steps for the conquest of the city. The Mexican commander had used the interregnum to strengthen himself in every conceivable manner. The cessation of hostilities doubtless was sought for by him in the hope of making such a disposition for a last struggle as would insure him a signal victory over the meager army marshaled on the plains before the old city. His duplicity, however, availed but little. Scott was too sagacious to be deluded by a Mexican's promise. The 7th of September found him prepared for stern work. His forces lay gathered around his headquarters at Tacubaya, about two and a half miles from

the city. Before him, twelve hundred yards distant, frowned the Mexican Gibraltar of Chapultepec, its height crowned by an almost impregnable "Castle," its sides lined with batteries, and its main approach from the west protected by very strong outworks and intrenched defenses, severally named *Molino del Rey* (King's Mill), *Casa de Mata*, etc. These were assaulted on the morning of September 8th, by Worth's division, when there followed a conflict memorable in the annals of war for its obstinate and bloody character. The Mexicans fought with thorough desperation, vieing with the Americans in valor, and tenacious of their positions to an astonishing degree. These outworks and primary defenses were won, but at the cost of nearly *one-fourth* of those engaged, viz.:—killed, 116, including 9 officers; wounded, 665, including 49 officers; missing, 18 rank and file—a total of 789 out of 3,251! McClellan was on the field, walking amid the carnage unscathed, laboring at the guns, or directing the officers of the batteries where to plant their shots with best effect.

The outworks won were destroyed or dismantled, and then deserted—an instance of Scott's strategy which proved how profoundly the man was versed in the means and ends of war. As he designed to force the city by its western gates, he desired to distract the enemy's attention from Chapultepec and the western gates' defenses. To this end he made it apparent that he was intimidated by the appearance of things at Chapultepec, and that he was going to desert its assault for an attempt on the *southern* gates of the capital. He therefore drew out his lines in such a manner as to convince the Mexicans of the change of his plan. A *feint* was made, on the 11th, with Pillow's entire division and Riley's brigade. Quitman was also ordered forward from his position at Coyoacan to join Pillow before the Acapulco entrance. The strategy took effect, for the Mexican General, conceiving the point of attack to have been changed, threw his best forces to the section menaced. In the darkness of the night of September 12th the divisions were withdrawn, and daylight of the 13th the roar of Huger's siege-guns announced that Chapultepec Castle was being bombarded. The *feint* was, however, continued by Twiggs, with Riley's brigade and Taylor's artillery, thus distracting the enemy as to the real designs of

the assailants. At eight o'clock, A. M. (on the 13th), the guns had so far breached the walls of the Castle that the bayonet assault was ordered.

"The divisions of Pillow and Quitman were detailed for the honorable service, while Worth's division, turning the hill, gained the north side to assist in the assault as circumstances might require, by resisting reinforcements from the city and by cutting off the enemy's retreat. Pillow's troops rushed forward from the now silenced *Molino del Rey*. They pressed forward up the easy ascent, scaling all outworks, and, in a brief time, planted scaling ladders against the inclosure walls. One loud huzza and the men streamed over—to court victory or death.

"Quitman was given the south-eastern approach. Supported by Shields and Smith, he pressed up the declivity, fortified in the most effective manner. Battery after battery was scaled and silenced, when Shields, filing to the left with his gallant volunteers, crossed the meadows before the Castle batteries, entered the outer court, and was, with Pillow's men, in at the victory. Quitman's force, delayed by the inch-by-inch fight up the hill, arrived to find the American flag floating over the Castle.

"What a shout rent the air from those ancient halls—the veritable 'Halls of Montezuma,' the splendid seat of the Spanish viceroys! It rolled over the valley, as if the sky was peopled with men and their voices came forth from the clouds—so it appeared to those in the valley below. Worth's men caught up the *jubilante* and re-echoed it, wildly and long.

"Mayer states that 'the onslaught had been so rapid and resistless that the Mexicans stood appalled as the human tide foamed and burst over their battlements. Men who had been stationed to fire the mines either fled or were shot down. Officers fell at their posts, and the brave old Bravo, fighting to the last, was taken prisoner with a thousand combatants.' The victory was entire and complete. The entire hill was in possession of the invaders, and the Mexican people, from their look-outs in the city, gave up all as lost."

Santa Anna was astounded at this reverse. He was at the southern *garita*, watching the movements of Twiggs, when the American flag, flying from the Castle staff, at once informed

him of the nature of the *ruse* practiced upon him and of his great loss. The Mexicans flying from the hill gathered on the plain below, and, closing in column, struck across the meadows for the city. Worth's division was there to cut off their retreat. Santa Anna, seeing their peril, pushed from the gates of San Cosmo and Belen a large body of fresh troops, with whom Worth soon became engaged in terrific and close combat.

Scott, being in the Castle almost at the moment of victory, directed the further movements of the divisions from its ramparts. Quitman was ordered to quick-march to Worth's relief by striking for the Belen entrance, thus calling off a portion of the forces pressing Worth. The movement was rapidly and successfully executed, and Worth was soon up to the intrenchments on the causeway, around which were gathered the dwellings of a fine suburb of the city. From the flat roofs of the houses the troops were galled by a fire of musketry. The pioneers immediately entered the dwellings, and cut their way through building after building until, before nightfall, the San Cosmo gate (the custom-house) was in possession of the American troops. There they remained during the night—thoroughly exhausted with their truly remarkable day's fighting.

The part McClellan performed may be inferred from Scott's report, wherein he specially refers to the services of the sappers and miners led by McClellan and Lieutenant Smith, and adds, of the five Lieutenants of Engineers—Beauregard, Stevens, Tower, Smith and McClellan—that, like their Captain (Mason), they won the admiration of all about them. Worth, in his report, said:—"Of the staff, Lieutenants Stephens, Smith and McClellan, engineers, displayed the gallantry, skill and conduct which so eminently distinguished their corps."

The occupation of the custom-house placed Worth within a few squares of the Grand Plaza—the goal of all their hopes—around which were the veritable "Halls of the Montezumas." But, the gallantry of Quitman's men gave them the honor of a first occupancy of the city proper. Their orders were to engage the enemy on the Belen causeway, while Worth should strike for the heart of the city. Once in the fray the troops of Shields (composed of the South Carolina and the New York

volunteers) were "irrepressible." They burst forward and occupied the Belen entrance, within the city, after having fought their way through a line of intrenchments thrown across the causeway. The Rifles (regulars) were their steady and unfaltering support, while the gallant Captain Drum served his howitzers with such fearful precision as to drive the foe within their last stronghold, the *Citadel*, a splendid work of masonry, from whose fire the division suffered severely up to the close of the day. Captain Drum was among its victims.

Santa Anna took refuge in the *Citadel* during the afternoon, after finding Worth in full possession of the San Cosmo suburb. At nine o'clock in the evening he fled from the city, a deposed and discomfited chieftain. Mexico had new rulers; she lay at the feet of a conqueror more merciful than her own people.

In the report of the Major commanding the engineers (John L. Smith) respecting the services rendered by his corps, satisfactory mention was made of McClellan's discharge of duty. From that report it appears that the engineers and the sappers and miners were employed all the night previous to the conflict on the morning of the 8th, in constructing and planting the batteries to operate against the *Casa de Mata, Molino del Rey*, and the earthworks on the west side of the hill. Lieutenants Stevens and McClellan, and the sappers and miners, were detailed, the report stated, to Worth's division, and performed most signal service. McClellan was the first officer to push into the city. At three o'clock, on the morning of the 14th, with his sappers and miners, he penetrated to the Alameda, but two squares from the Grand Plaza. He then made the discovery that the enemy's forces had evacuated the capital, though he found a great number of cut-throats—composed in part of two thousand released convicts—who, secreted on house-tops and in buildings, carried on a species of assassination which was only stopped by the most rigorous measures.

For the services rendered on the 12th of September McClellan was breveted Captain of Engineers—an honor he then declined. He was, a few days after, made brevet Captain "for gallant and meritorious conduct at Chapultepec and Mexico." This honor he accepted.

The city was occupied, on the 14th, by the American forces. The Mexican army had fled, during the night, as well as the National Congress. Scott remained in possession of the capital until a treaty was signed by ministers extraordinary, which indemnified the American Government for the war by the cession of California and New Mexico, and established the boundary line of the Rio Grande. This secured, the forces gradually withdrew; and McClellan returned to his country bearing the name of a brave man, a skillful engineer and an able commander.

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## CHAPTER II.

IN SERVICE AT WEST POINT—PREPARES MANUAL OF THE BAYONET EXERCISE—CONSTRUCTION OF FORT DELAWARE—SERVICE OF THE RED RIVER EXPLORATION—NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION—THE COUNTRY—THE WITCHITA MOUNTAINS—THE INDIANS—INCIDENTS OF ADVENTURE AND THE CHASE—RESULT OF THE EXPEDITION.

RETURNING from Mexico, in command of the sappers and miners, he was ordered to West Point. The sappers and miners were detailed to perform their various duties of trenching, throwing up field-works, laying platforms, pontooning, etc., for the instruction of the cadets. The company also served on special duty in construction of permanent fortifications, or in overseeing laborers. The Captain was thus converted into the *field professor*—for which his theoretical as well as practical experience well fitted him.

McClellan remained on duty at West Point until 1851; acting not only as Captain of field labors but as instructor in bayonet exercise. The want of efficiency, in the use of that important arm, induced him to adapt, from the standard French authorities, a manual of exercise for the bayonet, which has since become a text-book in the service. The aid he rendered, by practice as well as by precept, in transforming the bayonet from its old estate to become a weapon of terrible efficiency is acknowledged by the army authorities to have been important and significant. It proved not only the

versatility of the Captain's accomplishments, but showed him to possess that *instinctive* appreciation of the wants of the *hour* and of the fitness of things which alone distinguish those born to command. His future services in organizing the cavalry corps of the army and in preparing its manual of instruction; his report on the field operations and *materiel* of the armies of Europe in the years 1855-56; his choice as the superintending constructor of Fort Delaware; his call to the Red River Exploration and Observation Commission; his senior engineership on the coast survey of Texas rivers and harbors; his commission to the chief engineership of the survey of the *western* division of the proposed Pacific Railway; his detail to secret service and observation in the West Indies:—all conspire to prove McClellan to have been fitted, in an unusual degree, for a position in the United States military service.

The construction of Fort Delaware was prosecuted, under his supervision, in the summer and fall of 1851.

Under date of March 5th, 1852, Captain McClellan was assigned to duty on the Red River Exploration Expedition, under Captain Randolph B. Marcy, who had, for the three previous years, been engaged in tracing the sources of the Trinity, Brazos and Colorado rivers, as well as the Canadian branch of the Arkansas. Up to 1852, the head-waters of the Red river were lying in geographical obscurity. Captain Marcy says:—"My attention was frequently called to the remarkable fact that a portion of one of the largest and most important rivers in the United States, lying directly within the limits of the district I had been examining, remained up to that late period wholly unexplored and unknown, no white man having ever ascended the stream to its sources. The only information we had upon the subject was derived from Indians and semi-civilized Indian traders, and was of course very unreliable, indefinite, and unsatisfactory; in a word, the country embraced within the basin of Upper Red river had always been to us a 'terra incognita.' Several enterprising and experienced travelers had at different periods attempted the examination of this river, but, as yet, none had succeeded in reaching its sources.

"At a very early period, officers were sent out by the French Government to explore Red river, but their examinations

appear to have extended no further than the country occupied by the Natchitoches and Caddoes, in the vicinity of the present town of Natchitoches, Louisiana. Subsequent examinations had extended our acquaintance with its upper tributaries, but we were still utterly in the dark in regard to the true geographical position of its sources."

The expedition was ordered by the War Department to unravel not only the mystery of the river's sources but also that of the country adjacent. It went forth fully prepared for its labors, having a fine corps of officers and men of science—all protected by a strong guard from the Fifth infantry.

About the middle of May the Wichita mountains were made, when the *terra incognita* was reached. From that time up to the last of July, the explorations were prosecuted with success. The courses of streams were defined—new streams discovered and mapped—the country and all its peculiar features completely studied—the Indian tribes visited and "talked" to—thus adding greatly to the physical knowledge of that interesting region. To Captain McClellan were specially detailed the topographical duties of the expedition. That they were well performed the results testify.

We shall quote from the expedition report made by Captain Marcy, such portions as possess both a personal and general interest. The extracts will not detract from the unity of our biography, since Captain McClellan was a chief actor and a responsible director of the expedition :

"*May 18.*—We encamped upon a small affluent of Cache creek, where, on our arrival, we found no water except in occasional pools along the bed ; however, in the course of an hour some of the men who had gone a short distance up the creek came running back into camp and crying, at the top of their voices : ' Here comes a plenty of water for us, boys ! ' And, indeed, in a few minutes, much to our astonishment and delight (as we were doubtful about having a supply), a perfect torrent came rushing down the dry bed of the rivulet, filling it to the top of the banks, and continued running, turbid and covered with froth, as long as we remained. Our Delawares regarded this as a special favor from the Great Spirit, and looked upon it as a favorable augury to the success of our enterprise. To us it was a most inexplicable phenomenon, as

the weather for the last three days had been perfectly dry, with the sky cloudless. If the stream had been of much magnitude we should have supposed that the water came from a distance where there had been rains, but it was very small, extending not more than three miles from the point where we encamped.

"Our Delawares report that they have seen numerous fresh buffalo 'signs,' and that we shall probably soon come upon the herds. We have captured a horse to-day which has a brand upon him, and has probably strayed away from some party of Indians."

"*May 29.*—After digging down the banks of the creek this morning, we were enabled to cross the train and to resume our march up the river; our course led us toward the point where the river debouches from the mountains, and our present encampment is directly at the base of one of the peaks, near a spring of good water. This mountain is composed of huge masses of loose granite rock, thrown together in such confusion that it is seldom any portion can be seen in its original position. There are veins of quartz, greenstone, and porphyry running through the granite, similar to those that characterize the gold-bearing formation of California, New Mexico, and elsewhere. This fact, in connection with our having found some small particles of gold in the detritus along the bed of Otter creek, may yet lead to the discovery of important auriferous deposits in these mountains. Among the border settlers of Texas and Arkansas an opinion has for a long time prevailed that gold was abundant here, and several expeditions have been organized among them for the purpose of making examinations, but the Indians have opposed their operations, and in every instance, I believe, compelled them to abandon the enterprise and return home, so that as yet no thorough examination of the mountains has ever been made."

"*May 30.*—Captain McClellan returned this morning, having traced the meridian of the 100th degree of west longitude to where it strikes Red river. This point he ascertained to be about six miles below the junction of the two principal branches, and three-fourths of a mile below a small creek which puts in from the north upon the left bank, near where

the river bends from almost due west to north. At this point a cotton-wood tree, standing fifty feet from the water, upon the summit of a sand-hill, is blazed upon four sides, facing north, south, east and west, and upon these faces will be found the following inscriptions: upon the north side, 'Texas, 100° longitude;' upon the south side, 'Choctaw Nation, 100° longitude;' upon the east side, 'Meridian of 100°, May 29, 1852;' and upon the west side Captain McClellan marked my name, with the date. At the base of the sand-hill will be found four cotton-wood trees, upon one of which is marked 'Texas,' and upon another will be found inscribed '20 miles from Otter creek.'

"Red river at this place is a broad, shallow stream, six hundred and fifty yards wide, running over a bed of sand. Its course is nearly due west to the forks, and thence the course of the south branch is WNW. for eight miles, when it turns to nearly NW. The two branches are apparently of about equal magnitude, and between them, at the confluence, is a very high bluff, which can be seen for a long distance around."

"June 1.—During our march to-day we passed along the borders of a swift-running rivulet of clear water which issues from springs in the mountains, and is filled with a multitude of fish. We also passed near the base of a very prominent and symmetrical mountain, which can be seen for twenty miles upon our route, and is a most excellent landmark. Several of the gentlemen ascended this peak with the barometer, and its altitude, as thereby indicated, is seven hundred and eighty feet above the base.

"Captain McClellan has called this 'Mount Webster,' in honor of our great statesman; and upon a rock directly at the summit he has chiseled the names of some of the gentlemen of the party. The valleys lying between many of these mountains have a soil which is arable in the highest degree. They are covered with grasses, which our animals eat greedily. There are also many springs of cold, limpid water bursting out from the granite rocks of the mountains, and flowing down through the valleys, thereby affording us, at all times, a most delicious beverage where we were led to believe, from the representations of the Wichitas, we would find only

bitter and unpalatable water. This is an unexpected luxury to us, and we now begin to cherish the hope that all the discouraging accounts of those Indians may prove equally erroneous.

"Taking an old Comanche trail this morning, I followed it to a narrow defile in the mountains, which led me up through a very tortuous and rocky gorge, where the well-worn path indicated that it had been traveled for many years. It presented a most wild and romantic appearance as we passed along at the base of cliffs which rose perpendicularly for several hundred feet directly over our heads upon either side. We saw the tracks of several elk that had passed the defile the day previous."

"*June 6.*—We have seen the trail of a large party of Comanches, which our guide says passed here two days since, going south. I regret that we did not encounter them, as I was anxious to make inquiries concerning our onward route. These Indians were traveling with their families. Upon a war expedition they leave their families behind, and never carry lodges, encumbering themselves with as little baggage as possible. On the other hand, when they travel with their families, they always carry all their worldly effects, including their portable lodges, wherever they go; and as they seldom find an encampment upon the prairies where poles for the frame-work of the lodges can be procured, they invariably transport them from place to place, by attaching them to each side of the pack-horses, with one end trailing upon the ground. These leave parallel marks upon the soft earth after they have passed, and enable one at once to determine whether the trail is made by a war-party or otherwise."

"*June 12.*—A community of beavers have also selected a spot upon the creek near our camp, for their interesting labors and habitations. I know of no animal concerning which the accounts of travelers have been more extraordinary, more marvelous or contradictory, than those given of the beaver. By some he is elevated in point of intellect almost to a level with man. He has been said, for instance, to construct houses, with several floors and rooms; to plaster the rooms with mud in such a manner as to make smooth walls, and to drive stakes of six or eight inches in diameter into the

ground, and to perform many other astounding feats, which I am inclined to believe are not supported by credible testimony. Laying aside these questionable statements, there is quite sufficient in the natural history of the beaver to excite our wonder and admiration. For instance, at this place, upon an examination of the dam they have constructed, I was both astonished and delighted at the wonderful sagacity, skill and perseverance which they have displayed. In the selection of a suitable site, and in the erection of the structure, they appear to have been guided by something more than mere animal instinct, and have exhibited as correct a knowledge of hydrostatics, and the action of forces resulting from currents of water, as the most scientific millwright would have done. Having chosen a spot where the banks on each side of the creek were narrow and sufficiently high to raise a head of about five feet, they selected two cotton-wood trees about fifteen inches in diameter, situated above this point, and having an inclination toward the stream: these they cut down with their teeth (as the marks upon the stumps plainly showed), and, floating them down to the position chosen for the dam, they were placed across the stream with an inclination downward, uniting in the center. This formed the foundation upon which the superstructure of brush and earth was placed, in precisely the same manner as a brush-dam is made by our millwrights, with the bushes and earth alternating and packed closely, the butts in all cases turned down the stream. After this is raised a sufficient height, the top is covered with earth, except in the center, where there is a sluice or waste-wier, which lets off the superfluous water when it rises so high as to endanger the structure. In examining the results of the labors of these ingenious quadrupeds, it occurred to me that the plan of erecting our brush-dams must have been originally suggested from witnessing those of the beavers, as they are very similar. I watched for some time upon the banks of the pond, but could see none of the animals. I presume they think we make too much noise in our camp to suit them, and deem it most prudent to remain concealed in their sub-marine houses."

"*June 16.*—At our encampment of this evening is the last running water we have found in ascending this branch of

Red river. We are near the junction of the last branch of any magnitude that enters the river from the north, and about three miles from the point where it debouches from the plains, in a grove of large cotton-wood trees upon the south bank of the river. Under the roots of one of the largest of these trees, which stands near the river, and below all others in the grove, I have buried a bottle containing the following memorandum: 'On the 16th day of June, 1852, an exploring expedition, composed of Captain R. B. Marcy, Captain G. B. McClellan, Lieutenant J. Updegraff, and Dr. G. C. Shumard, with fifty-five men of company D, Fifth infantry, encamped here, having this day traced the north branch of Red river to its sources. Accompanying the expedition were Captain J. H. Strain, of Fort Washita, and Mr. J. R. Suydam, of New York city.' This tree is blazed on the north and east sides, and is marked upon the north side with a pencil as follows: 'Exploring Expedition, June 16, 1852.' "

"June 20.—We made an early march this morning, passing over the high hills bordering the river, and the broad swells of prairie adjoining, for twelve miles, when we reached the valley of a very beautiful stream, twenty feet wide and six inches deep, running rapidly over a gravelly bed, through a valley about a mile wide of sandy soil, with large cotton-wood trees along the banks. I have called this 'McClellan's creek,' in compliment to my friend, Captain McClellan, who I believe to be the first white man that ever set eyes upon it.

"During the middle of the day, when the earth and the adjacent strata of air had become heated by the almost vertical rays of the sun, we observed, as usual, upon the 'Llano estacado,' an incessant tremulous motion in the lower strata of the atmosphere, accompanied by a most singular and illusive mirage. This phenomenon, which so bitterly deluded the French army in Egypt, and has been observed in many other places, is here seen in perfection.

"The very extraordinary refraction of the atmosphere upon these elevated plateaus, causes objects in the distance to be distorted into the most wild and fantastic forms, and often exaggerated to many times their true size. A raven, for instance, would present the appearance of a man walking erect; and an antelope often be mistaken for a horse or

buffalo. In passing along over this thirsty and extended plain in a warm day, the eye of a stranger is suddenly gladdened by the appearance of a beautiful lake, with green and shady groves directly upon the opposite bank. His heart beats with joy at the prospect of speedily luxuriating in the cool and delicious element before him, and he urges his horse forward, thinking it very strange that he does not reach the oasis. At one time he imagines that he has made a sensible diminution in the distance, and goes on with renewed vigor and cheerfulness; then again he fancies that the object recedes before him, and he becomes discouraged and disheartened. And thus he rides for miles and miles, and still finds himself no nearer the goal than when first he saw it—when, perhaps, some sudden change in the atmosphere would dissipate the illusion, and disclose to him the fact that he had been following a mirage.”

“June 26.—Our road during the whole day has passed through a continuous dog-town (*Spermophilus ludovicianus*), and we were often obliged to turn out of our course to avoid the little mounds around their burrows.

“In passing along through these villages the little animals are seen in countless numbers sitting upright at the mouths of their domicils, presenting much the appearance of the stumps of small trees; and so incessant is the clatter of their barking, that it requires but little effort of the imagination to fancy oneself surrounded by the busy hum of a city.

“The immense number of animals in some of these towns, or warrens, may be conjectured from the large space which they sometimes cover. The one at this place is about twenty-five miles in the direction through which we have passed it. Supposing its dimensions in other directions to be the same, it would embrace an area of six hundred and twenty-five square miles, or eight hundred and ninety-six thousand acres. Estimating the holes to be at the usual distance of about twenty yards apart, and each burrow occupied by a family of four or five dogs, I fancy that the aggregate population would be greater than any other city in the universe.

“This interesting and gregarious little specimen of the mammalia of our country, which is found assembled in such vast communities, is indigenous to the most of our far western

prairies, from Mexico to the northern limits of the United States, and has often been described by travelers who have been upon the plains. But as there are some facts in relation to their habits which I have never seen mentioned in any published account of them, I trust I shall be pardoned if I add a few remarks to what has already been said. In the selection of a site or position for their towns they appear to have a regard to their food, which is a species of short, wiry grass, growing upon the elevated plains, where there is often no water near. I have sometimes seen their towns upon the elevated table-lands of New Mexico, where there was no water upon the surface of the ground for twenty miles, and where it did not seem probable that it could be obtained by excavating to the depth of a hundred feet. This has induced me to believe that they do not require that element without which most other animals perish in a short time.

"As there are generally no rains or dews during the summer months upon the plains where these towns are found, and as the animals never wander far from home, I think I am warranted in coming to the conclusion that they require no water beyond that which the grass affords them. That they hybernate and pass the winter in a lethargic or torpid state is evident, from the fact that they lay up no sustenance for the winter, and that the grass around their holes dries up in the autumn, the earth freezes hard and renders it utterly impossible for them to procure food in the usual manner.

"When the prairie-dog first feels the approach of the sleeping season (generally about the last days of October), he closes all the passages to his dormitory to exclude the cold air, and betakes himself to his brumal slumber with the greatest possible care. He remains housed until the warm days of spring, when he removes the obstructions from his door and again appears above ground as frolicsome as ever.

"I have been informed by the Indians that a short time before a cold storm in the autumn, all the prairie-dogs may be seen industriously occupied with weeds and earth, closing the entrances to their burrows. They are sometimes, however, seen reopening them while the weather is still cold and stormy, but mild and pleasant weather is always certain to follow.

"It appears, therefore, that instinct teaches the little quadrupeds when to expect good or bad weather, and to make their arrangements accordingly. A species of small owl is always found in the dog-towns, sitting at the mouths of the holes when not occupied by the dogs; whether for the purpose of procuring food, or for some other object, I do not know. They do not, however, as some have asserted, burrow with the dogs; and when approached, instead of entering the holes, they invariably fly away. It has also been said that the rattlesnake is a constant companion of the dog; but this is a mistake, for I have sometimes passed for days through the towns without seeing one. They are, however, often seen in the holes in company with the dogs, and it has been supposed by some that they were welcome guests with the proprietors of the establishments; but we have satisfied ourselves that this is a domestic arrangement entirely at variance with the wishes of the dogs, as the snakes prey upon them, and must be considered as intruders. They are probably attracted to the burrows for the purpose of procuring food, as one snake which we killed was found to have swallowed a full-grown dog."\*

"*June 28.*—As Captain McClellan and myself were passing to-day along under the bluffs, we saw in advance of us a herd of antelopes quietly feeding among some mezquite trees, when the idea occurred to me of attempting to call them with a deer-bleat, which one of the Delawares had made for me. I accordingly advanced several hundred yards to near the crest of the hill, from which I had a fair view of the animals, and, very deliberately seating myself upon the ground, screened from their observation by the tall grass around me, I took out my bleat and commenced exercising my powers in imitating the cry of the fawn. I soon succeeded in attracting their attention, and in a short time decoyed one of the unsuspicious animals within range of my rifle, which I raised to my shoulder, and, taking deliberate aim, was in the act of pulling

\* Horace Greeley, in his "Across the Plains," devotes attention to the prairie-dogs and their habits. He falls into the common error adverted to above, of charging the dog with associating on friendly terms with the owl and rattlesnake. As Mr. Greeley is more of a political economist than a naturalist his "observations" will not weigh heavily in the scale of prairie-dog history.

trigger, when my attention was suddenly and most unexpectedly drawn aside by a rustling which I heard in the grass to my left. Casting my eyes in that direction, to my no small astonishment I saw a tremendous panther bounding at full speed directly toward me, and within the short distance of twenty steps. As may be imagined, I immediately abandoned the antelope, and, directing my rifle at the panther, sent a ball through his chest, which stretched him out upon the grass about ten yards from where I had taken my position. Impressed with the belief that I had accomplished a feat of rather more than ordinary importance in the sporting line, I placed my hand to my mouth ("a la savage"), and gave several as loud shouts of exultation as my weak lungs would admit, partly for the purpose of giving vent to my feelings of triumph upon the occasion, and also to call the Captain, whom I had left some distance back with the horses. As he did not hear me I went back for him, and on returning to the spot where I had fired upon the panther, we discovered him upon his feet, making off. The Captain gave him another shot as he was running, and then closed in with his rifle clubbed, and it required several vigorous blows, laid on in quick succession, to give him his quietus.

"The panther had probably heard the bleat, and was coming toward it with the pleasant anticipation of making his breakfast from a tender fawn; but, fortunately for me, I disappointed him. It occurred to me afterward that it would not always be consistent with one's safety to use the deer-bleat in this wild country, unless we were perfectly certain we should have our wits about us in the event of a panther or large bear (which is often the case) taking it into his head to give credence to the counterfeit. This was a large specimen of the *Felis concolor*, or North American cougar, measuring eight feet from his nose to the end of his tail."

"June 30.—Although we were suffering most acutely from the effects of the nauseating and repulsive water in the river, yet we were still under the painful necessity of using it. Several of the men had been taken with violent cramps in the stomach and vomiting, yet they did not murmur; on the contrary, they were cheerful, and indulged in frequent jokes at the expense of those who were sick. The principal topic

of conversation with them seemed to be a discussion of the relative merits of the different kinds of fancy iced drinks which could be procured in the cities, and the prices that could be obtained for some of them if they were within reach of our party. Indeed, it seems to me that we were not entirely exempt from the agitation of a similar subject; and from the drift of the argument, I have no doubt that a moderate quantity of Croton water, cooled with Boston ice, would have met with as ready a sale in our little mess, as in almost any market that could have been found. If I mistake not, one of the gentlemen offered as high as two thousand dollars for a single bucket of the pure element; but this was one of those few instances in which money was not sufficiently potent to attain the object desired.

"We laid ourselves down upon our blankets and endeavored to obliterate the sensation of thirst in the embraces of Morpheus; but so far as I was concerned, my slumbers were continually disturbed by dreams, in which I fancied myself swallowing huge draughts of ice-water."\*

"*July 1.*—After undergoing the most intense sufferings from drinking this nauseating fluid, we indulged freely in the pure and delicious element as we ascended along the narrow dell through which the stream found its way. And following up for two miles the tortuous course of the gorge, we reached a point where it became so much obstructed with huge piles of rock, that we were obliged to leave our animals and clamber up the remainder of the distance on foot.

"The gigantic escarpments of sandstone, rising to the giddy height of eight hundred feet upon each side, gradually closed in until they were only a few yards apart and finally united over head, leaving a long, narrow corridor beneath, at the base of which the head spring of the principal or main branch of Red river takes its rise. This spring bursts out from its cavernous reservoir, and, leaping down over the huge masses of rock below, here commences its long journey to unite with other tributaries in making the Mississippi the noblest river in the universe. Directly at the spring we found three small

\* Lieutenant Strain tells a similar story. In his explorations for a ship canal route across the isthmus his men suffered the most horrible agonies for want of food and drink. In their insane ravings their minds continually dwelt on feasts, of which they were partakers.

cotton-wood trees, one of which was blazed, and the fact of our having visited the place, with the date, marked upon it.

“On beholding this minute rivulet as it wends its tortuous course down the steep descent of the cañon, it is difficult to realize that it forms the germ of one of the largest and most important rivers in America—floating steamers upon its bosom for nearly two thousand miles, and depositing an alluvion along its borders which renders its valley unsurpassed for fertility.

“We took many copious draughts of the cool and refreshing water in the spring, and thereby considered ourselves, with the pleasure we received from the beautiful and majestic scenery around us, amply remunerated for all our fatigue and privations. The magnificence of the views that presented themselves to our eyes as we approached the head of the river, exceeded any thing I had ever beheld. It is impossible for me to describe the sensations that came over me, and the exquisite pleasure I experienced, as I gazed upon these grand and novel pictures.

“The stupendous escarpments of solid rock, rising precipitously from the bed of the river to such a height as, for a great portion of the day, to exclude the rays of the sun, were worn away, by the lapse of time and the action of the water and the weather, into the most fantastic forms, that required but little effort of the imagination to convert into works of art, and all united in forming one of the grandest and most picturesque scenes that can be imagined. We all, with one accord, stopped and gazed with wonder and admiration upon a panorama which was now for the first time exhibited to the eyes of civilized man. Occasionally might be seen a good representation of the towering walls of a castle of the feudal ages, with its giddy battlements pierced with loop-holes, and its projecting watch-towers standing out in bold relief upon the azure ground of the pure and transparent sky above. In other places our fancy would metamorphose the escarpments into a bastion front, as perfectly modeled and constructed as if it had been a production of the genius of Vauban, with redoubts and salient angles all arranged in due order. Then, again, we would see a colossal specimen of sculpture representing the human figure, with all the features

of the face, which, standing upon its lofty pedestal, overlooks the valley, and seems to have been designed and executed by the almighty Artist as the presiding genius of these dismal solitudes.

"All was here crude nature, as it sprung into existence at the fiat of the almighty Architect of the universe, still preserving its primeval type, its unreclaimed simplicity and wildness; and it forcibly inspired me with that veneration which is justly due to the high antiquity of nature's handiworks, and which seems to increase as we consider the solemn and important lesson that is taught us in reflecting upon their continued permanence when contrasted with our fleeting and momentary existence.

"On climbing up to the summit of the escarpment over the head of the spring, we found ourselves upon the level plain of the 'Llano estacado,' which spreads out from here in one uninterrupted desert, to the base of the mountains east of the Rio Grande. The geographical position of this point, as determined by courses and distances from the place where we left the wagons, is in latitude  $34^{\circ} 42'$  north, and longitude  $103^{\circ} 7' 11''$  west; and its approximate elevation above the sea, as determined by frequent and careful barometric observations, is 2,450 feet."

"*July 4.*—This morning at an early hour we turned our faces toward home, and traveled about five miles down the right bank of the river, when we discovered that the country in advance upon that side was so much broken into deep gulleys and abrupt ridges that it would be impracticable to get our wagons over them. We therefore crossed to the north side of the river, where we found a most excellent road over smooth prairie. At our present position we have a pond of excellent water, with an abundance of hackberry and cotton-wood for fuel. On approaching the pond, Captain McClellan and myself, who were in advance of the command, espied a huge panther very leisurely walking away in an opposite direction; and as, in hunter's parlance, we 'had the wind of him,' it enabled us to ride sufficiently near to give him a shot before he discovered us. It took effect and caused him to make a tremendous leap into the air, and, running a short distance, he fell dead. We have also killed four deer

to-day, which supplies us with an abundance of fresh meat. Some of the bucks are now very fat, and the venison is superior to any I have ever eaten.

"The pond of water at our camp is a very peculiar and strange freak of nature. It is almost round, two hundred and fifty feet in diameter, with the water thirty feet deep, and perfectly transparent and sweet. The surface of the water in this basin is about twenty feet below the banks, and the sides of the depression nearly perpendicular. The country for two or three miles around, in all directions, rises to the height of from one to two hundred feet. As this pond seems to be supplied by springs, and has no visible outlet, it occurred to me that there might possibly be a subterraneous communication which carried off the surplus water and the earth from the depression of the basin." .

"July 8.—We have had several good opportunities since we have been upon the plains of witnessing the relative speed of the different animals found, and our observations have confirmed the opinion I have before advanced. For example, the grayhounds have, upon several different occasions, run down and captured the deer and the prairie-rabbit, which are also considered very fleet; but, although they have had very many races with the antelope under favorable circumstances, yet they have never in one instance been able to overtake them; on the contrary, the longer the chase has continued, the greater has been the distance between them. The *Cervus Virginianus* (our red deer) has generally been considered the fleetest animal upon the continent after the horse, but the *Antilocapra Americana*, or prong-horned antelope of the plains, is very much swifter."

"July 9.—It is a most beautiful spectacle to mark the slender and graceful figures of the hounds as they strain every muscle to its utmost tension in their eager and rapid pursuit of the panic-stricken deer. It is a contest between two of the fleetest and most graceful and beautiful quadrupeds in existence: the one has his life at stake, and the other is animated by all that eager enthusiasm which is characteristic of a thorough-breed animal. They both put forth all the energies with which the Author of their being has endowed them, and seem to fly over the wavy undulations of the plains. Now

they are upon the summit of one of those swells, and the startled animal has disappeared in an adjoining ravine, and for a moment the hounds are at fault; but soon they espy him, panting up the opposite acclivity, when they are off again like the wind, in hot pursuit, and, rapidly closing upon their victim, they are soon engaged in the death-struggle. This sport is most intensely exciting, and he who would not become interested in it would hardly be entitled to claim consanguinity with the great family of Nimrod."

"*July 15.*—John Bushman, our interpreter, was much surprised to-day, on calling a doe toward him with a deer-bleat, to see a small fawn following after its mother; but imagine his astonishment, when immediately behind the fawn came a huge panther bounding rapidly toward him, and in a twinkling he fastened his claws in the vitals of his victim. He, however, in this instance, caught a tartar, and paid dearly for his temerity, as John, with a spirit of indignation that would have done credit to the better feelings of any man, raised his rifle, and, instead of killing the deer, which was entirely at his mercy, planted the contents in the sides of the panther.

"The method of hunting deer by the use of the bleat is practiced extensively by the Delawares in this country, and with great success.

"They make the bleat somewhat similar to the first joint of a clarionet, with a brass reed scraped very thin, and applied in the same manner as upon the clarionet, and so regulate and adjust the instrument by experiment as to imitate almost precisely the cry of the young fawn. They use them during the months of June and July, before the does have weaned their young. Riding along near a copse of trees or brush where they suppose the deer to be lying, they sound their bleats, which can be heard for half a mile; and as the doe never remains near her fawn any longer than is necessary to give it food (when she retires to an adjoining thicket and makes her bed alone), she immediately takes alarm at what she conceives a cry of distress from her helpless offspring, and, in the intensity of her maternal affection, she rushes at full speed in the direction of the cry, and frequently comes within a few yards of the hunter, who stands ready to give

her a death-wound. This is an unsportsmanlike way of hunting deer, and only admissible when provisions are scarce.

"The bear, the wolf and panther often come at the call of the bleat, supposing they are to feast upon the tender flesh of the fawn. It might be supposed that in the country where there are so many carnivorous animals, the greater portion of the deer would be killed by them while young; but nature, in the wisdom of its arrangements, has provided the helpless little quadruped with a means of security against their attacks, which is truly wonderful. It is a well-known fact among hunters that the deer deposit a much stronger scent upon their tracks than any other animal, inasmuch as a dog can without difficulty follow them, long after they have passed, at a distance of many yards from the track. Notwithstanding this, the fawns, until they are sufficiently grown to be able to make good running, give out no scent whatever upon their tracks, and a dog of the best nose can not follow them except by sight. I have often seen the experiment made, and am perfectly satisfied that such is the case; this, therefore, must, in a great measure, protect them from the attacks of the wild animals of the country."

"The nomadic Indian of the prairies, free as the boundless plains over which he roams, neither knows nor wants any luxuries beyond what he finds in the buffalo or deer around him. These serve him with food, clothing, and a covering for his lodge, and he sighs not for the titles and distinction which occupy the thoughts and engage the energies of civilized man. His only ambition consists in being able to cope successfully with his enemy in war, and in managing his steed with unfailing adroitness. He is in the saddle from boyhood to old age, and his favorite horse is his constant companion. It is when mounted that the Comanche exhibits himself to the best advantage: here he is at home, and his skill in various maneuvers which he makes available in battle—such as throwing himself entirely upon one side of his horse, and discharging his arrows with great rapidity toward the opposite side from beneath the animal's neck while he is at full speed—is truly astonishing. Many of the women are equally expert, as equestrians, with the men. They ride upon the same saddles, and in the same manner, with a leg upon each side

of the horse. As an example of their skill in horsemanship, two young women of one of the bands of the Northern Comanches, while we were encamped near them, upon seeing some antelopes at a distance from their camp, mounted horses, and, with lassoes in their hands, set off at full speed in pursuit of this fleetest inhabitant of the plains. After pursuing them for some distance, and taking all the advantages which their circuitous course permitted, they finally came near them, and, throwing the lasso with unerring precision, secured each an animal and brought it back in triumph to the camp. Every warrior has his war-horse, which is the fleetest that can be obtained, and he prizes him more highly than any thing else in his possession, and it is seldom that he can be induced to part with him at any price. He never mounts him except when going into battle, the buffalo-chase, or upon state occasions. On his return from an excursion he is met at the door of his lodge by one of his wives, who takes his horse and attends to its wants with the utmost care. The prairie warrior performs no menial labor; his only occupation is in war and the chase. His wives, who are but little dearer to him than his horse, perform all the drudgery. He follows the chase, he smokes his pipe, he eats and sleeps; and thus he passes his time, and, in his own estimation, he is the most lordly and independent sovereign in the universe."

"The Creek Indians, who exercise a good influence over the prairie tribes, have counseled them to commit no acts of hostility upon the Delawares and Shawnees, and, I presume, they will take measures to enforce a strict adherence to their wishes in this respect. These people, who are so extremely jealous of their own freedom that they will often commit suicide rather than be taken prisoners, are prone to enslave others, and this dominant principle is carried to the greatest extreme so far as regards their women. A beast of burden and a slave to the will of her brutal master, yet, strange as it may appear, the Comanche woman seems contented with her lot, and submits to her fate without a murmur. The hardships imposed upon the females are most severe and cruel. The distance of rank and consideration which exists between the black slave and his master is not greater than between the Comanche warrior and his wife. Every degrading office that

is imposed upon the black by the most tyrannical masters falls, among the Comanches, to the lot of the wretched female. They, in common with other Indians, are not a prolific race—indeed, it is seldom that a woman has more than three or four children. Many of these, owing to unavoidable exposure, die young; the boys, however, are nurtured with care and treated with great kindness, while the girls are frequently beaten and abused unmercifully. I have never seen an idiot, or one that was naturally deformed, among them.

“In their treatment of prisoners of war there was also a very marked difference. The eastern tribes, although they put their prisoners to tortures of the most appalling character, seldom, if ever, violate the chastity of the females; while, on the contrary, the prairie Indians do not put their prisoners to death by prolonged tortures, but invariably compel the females to submit to their lewd embraces. There is, at this time, a white woman among the Middle Comanches, by the name of Parker, who, with her brother, was captured while they were young children, from their father's house in the western part of Texas. This woman has adopted all the habits and peculiarities of the Comanches; has an Indian husband and children, and can not be persuaded to leave them. The brother of the woman, who had been ransomed by a trader and brought home to his relatives, was sent back by his mother for the purpose of endeavoring to prevail upon his sister to leave the Indians and return to her family; but he stated to me that on his arrival she refused to listen to the proposition, saying that her husband, children, and all that she held most dear, were with the Indians, and there she should remain.”

## CHAPTER III.

SERVICES IN OREGON—EXPLORATION OF THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS—HIS REPORT—DETAILED TO EXAMINE RAILWAYS—VALUABLE REPORT.

On the 8th of September, 1852, Captain McClellan was ordered to the coast and harbor survey of Texas. Under date of April 18th, 1853, he reported results, in giving a detail of survey, embracing a description of the bars on the Texan coast, from Paso Cavallo to the mouth of the Rio Grande; of the harbors of Brazos Santiago, Corpus Christi, Aransas, Paso Cavallo, etc.

Early in April (1853), he was ordered to report for duty to Governor Stevens of Oregon, who was placed in charge of the survey of the northern route for the Pacific Railway. The order for the survey issued from the War Department, April 8th. It assigned Captain McClellan the western section—the most difficult and responsible portion of the entire survey. The Secretary's order read :

"In the exploration of the Cascade range, the Brigadier-General in command of the Pacific division will assign to Captain McClellan two officers from those who may volunteer for the service, and thirty men to be selected from the several companies stationed in the Territory of Washington and on the Columbia river. Every facility will be given to Captain McClellan and his party in the discharge of their difficult and important duties, and much is expected from the hearty co-operation and assistance of the officers and troops stationed in the Territory."

The Captain was also assigned the responsible duty of laying out a military road from Walla-Walla to Puget's Sound. His orders were :

"WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C., }  
"May 9th, 1853. }

"SIR:—

"The construction of the military road from Walla-Walla to Steilacoom, Puget's Sound, authorized by the act of Congress, approved January 7, 1853, is assigned to you under the general directions of Governor I. I. Stevens. You are authorized to make a requisition for such part of the appropriation as may

be necessary to conduct the preliminary surveys and location of the road. These being accomplished, you will enter into contracts with responsible persons for the construction. In order to avoid delay, you are authorized to draw upon this department for a portion, or the whole of the appropriation, as soon as you have formed the required contracts, which will be at once forwarded to this department for its sanction.

"It is important that this road should be opened in season for the fall emigration; you will, therefore, use every exertion to do so.

"Should it be found impossible to accomplish this, you will, at least, endeavor to fix the line of the road, especially through the Cascade mountains, and to perform such work on the most difficult portions as will enable the emigrants to render the route practicable by their own exertions, detaching a suitable person as guide and director to meet them at Walla-Walla. Should you find it impossible, you are authorized to let out different portions of the road, or different kinds of work, on separate contracts. On account of the peculiar nature of the work, you may find it advisable, instead of contracting for the performance of a specified amount of work, to contract for the supply of the necessary laborers and tools, taking precautions to secure good ones. In any event, you will so arrange your operations as, first, to secure a practicable wagon-road between the extremities of the road; devoting the remainder of the funds at your disposal to the improvement of the more important points, always endeavoring to make the whole road a good one.

Very respectfully,

"JEFFERSON DAVIS, *Secretary of War.*

"Brevet Captain GEORGE B. McCLELLAN,

*"Corps of Engineers."*

Governor Stevens' sub-instructions, dated May 9th, read as follows:

"WASHINGTON, D. C., }  
"May 9, 1853. }

"SIR:—

"On your arrival at San Francisco, you will ascertain from the proper sources the exact state of affairs with reference to the supplies and personnel of your command. Before leaving there for the Columbia river, you will make all the arrangements necessary to carry out the general instructions for the conduct of the expedition.

"Having arrived at Astoria, you will at once proceed to organize your command at such point, either in Oregon or Washington Territory, as you may decide to be the best. You will employ such guides, hunters and muleteers as you may find necessary, as well as the civil assistants indispensable to the performance of the required duties. With regard to these,

and all other points involving expenditure, you will be careful to observe the strictest economy compatible with the success of the expedition. The first and most important point to which your attention is to be directed, will be the exploration of the Cascade mountains. You will thoroughly explore this range from the Columbia river to the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, making detailed examinations of the passes and obtaining full information in relation to the range in general. Pending this examination, you will endeavor to examine the line of the proposed road from Walla-Walla to Steilacoom, and to start its construction. Having completed the survey of the Cascade range, you will at once proceed eastward as far as the Rocky mountains, unless you meet, before reaching that range, the main party coming from the east. In selecting your route, you will start from the most practicable pass in the Cascade range, and follow what you regard as the most promising line for a practicable road. From the nature of the case, it is impossible for me to give you detailed instructions; but I have, in the course of a number of conversations, fully explained to you the objects of the expedition, my own probable operations, and my views.

"I have, therefore, to direct you to keep constantly in your mind the tenor of these conversations, and the written general instructions. You will use your own judgment as to the manner of carrying them out in the most rapid and effectual manner.

"Whenever you meet with the main party from the east, or any portion of it, you will at once assume the command, (in my absence,) and give whatever orders may be necessary, in your opinion, to carry out the objects of the expedition. Funds will be placed at your disposal to meet your expenses.

"Inclosed are the general and detailed instructions of the expedition, with an explanatory memorandum.

"Yours, etc.,

"ISAAC I. STEVENS.

"Brevet Captain G. B. McCLELLAN.

"*Corps of Engineers.*"

Of the duties performed on the western section by Captain McClellan, Governor Stevens afterward reported :

"Captain McClellan's party, in addition to the scientific corps already mentioned, consisted of five assistants in observations, carrying instruments, etc. ; two Sergeants, two Corporals, and twenty-five privates Fourth infantry; two chief packers, three hunters and herdsmen, and twenty packers—sixty-four persons in all, besides himself.

"He left Vancouver on the 24th of July, and striking the

Cathlapoot'l on the 1st of August, following up its valley four days, crossed the divide on the 5th to the south of Mount St. Helens, turned round to the south and east of Mount Adams, and reached the Wenass (a branch of the Nahchess) on the 20th of August. At this point one party was sent, under Lieutenant Hodges, to Steilacoom, across by the Nahchess Pass; another, under Lieutenant Mowry, to the Dalles; a third, under Mr. Gibbs, to the mouth of the Yakima; a fourth, under Lieutenant Duncan, to the main Yakima; while Captain McClellan went in person to examine the Nahchess Pass.

"The camp was moved to Ketetas, on the main Yakima, September 3d. From this point the main Yakima Pass was examined, and on the 19th, all the detached parties, having previously rejoined the main party, moved northward, and reached the Columbia river a little below the mouth of the Pischous on the 21st, and Fort Okinakane on the 27th of September.

"Subsequent to this date, the party examined the country to the Barrier river, (its several heads by small parties,) its valley to the Columbia river, that river to Fort Okinakane, and explored the whole country east of the Cascades to the Columbia river, and north to above our parallel, and crossed the river at Colville on the 18th of October.

"On leaving the Yakima, September 19th, Captain McClellan's party was reduced to thirty-six men in all, including himself, by the discharge of a portion of the scientific corps and of the packers, and by sending in all the troops but one Sergeant and seven privates.

"Subsequent to reaching Olympia, Captain McClellan had made an examination of the eastern shore of the sound to north of Snohomish river, and of that river and the Snoqualme, and of the adjacent country, for some miles above the Snoqualme Falls."

The surveys were so far completed that, February 25th, 1854, the Captain submitted his report. Its length prevents an insertion entire, in this place; but we may recur to it in quotations, thus giving its salient points and leading incidents.

The party reached Vancouver, June 27th; but, owing to the several annoying delays in obtaining animals and in

organizing the expedition, the start was not made until July 24th. It comprised the scientific staff, three non-commissioned officers, fourteen privates, with packers, herders and hunters, in all numbering sixty-five persons, besides three leaders. One hundred and seventy-three mules and horses did the carrying.

The route pursued was to Cathlapoot'l, Chequos, and Atahnam, which latter place was reached August 17th. Here McClellan learned that the people were already engaged in opening a road over the mountains, through the Nahchess Pass, which was declared easily practicable. Proceeding on to the valley of the Wenass, the party was halted in camp, in order to divide into exploration parties. Lieutenant Hodges was sent off to Steilacoom for supplies, as well as to reconnoiter the new pass and the road to that little place. Lieutenant Duncan was detailed, with a sufficient force, to cross the main Yakima river, to obtain all possible information in regard to the surrounding country, particularly toward the north. Mr. Gibbs, the Geologist, was given a party, with which to explore the valley of the Yakima down to the Columbia river. Captain McClellan took the Nahchess Pass for his inspection. Lieutenant Mowry remained in the camp at Wenass, in charge of the depôt.

McClellan ascertained the entire impracticability of the Nahchess Pass for a railway, and returned to camp. On the 3d of September, the depôt was removed from Wenass to Ketetas, on the main Yakima. On the 4th, the Captain left camp to explore the pass at the the head of the river. Of the valley of the Yakima, he wrote :

"The Yakima unites with the Columbia in a vast sage desert, extending to the north and north-east as far as the eye can reach ; and the desolate, dark-gray color of the sage is unbroken by the verdure of grass or trees. The Columbia is here about four hundred yards in width, with sand and gravel banks thirty feet in height ; a placid current ; here and there a cluster of willow bushes border the stream, usually destitute of vegetation. In the Yakima, at its mouth, are three islands covered with good grass—all that is to be found in the vicinity. Neither stone nor timber occurs in the neighborhood. The valley of the Yakima soon becomes

more contracted by low hills, which gradually close upon it, and soon increase in height as the stream is ascended. To the commencement of the pine timber, a distance of nearly one hundred miles from the mouth, the average width of the valley is about six miles, occasionally reduced to four or five hundred yards by spurs closing in on both sides, and sometimes widening out to ten miles. Cotton-wood and willow fringe the streams; grass is generally confined to the water's edge, but is not in sufficient quantity to adapt the valley to grazing purposes on a large scale. In some of the small lateral valleys good bunch-grass is found, as well as on the summits of the highest ridges and hills. But the winters are too severe for cattle to thrive in the open air, the whole country being covered with snow; and, in addition, the bunch-grass is of too scanty a growth to be cut for hay. During the winter, the Indians drive their horses and cattle to the most sheltered spots, where they feed on wild sage and willow."

After the coming in of the several parties, the passage of the Cascade mountains, between the Lakima and Columbia rivers, was commenced. From the report we quote:

"We had expected to find the country north of this range rather level, or, at most, rolling and covered with open pine woods. Our surprise may be imagined when the view spread before us from a commanding point, a little below the summit, is described. Five thousand two hundred feet below us lay the Columbia, apparently almost at our feet; so small and insignificant did it appear, that we could not believe it to be the 'Great river.' In front of us the Cascade range extended directly to the river, crossing it in fact; so that, to the north and west, there was nothing to be seen but mountain piled on mountain—rugged and impassable. About west-north-west was a handsome snow-peak, smaller than Mount Baker; as it is not to be found on any previous map that I know of, and had no name, I called it Mount Stuart. Far in the distance to the northward was seen a range, running nearly east and west, alongside of which the Columbia flows before reaching the Okinakane. That portion of the Cascade range which crosses the Columbia sinks into an elevated plateau, which extends as far as the limit of

vision to the eastward—this is the Spokane plain. On it we could see no indication of water ; not a single tree, except on the mountain spur ; not one spot of verdure. It was of a dead yellowish hue, with large clouds of black blending into the general tinge. It appeared to be a sage-desert, with a scanty growth of dry bunch-grass, and frequent outcroppings of basalt. Descending by a very steep trail, we reached the valley of the Columbia on the 21st. Through a valley about a mile in breadth, in which not a tree is to be seen, and seldom even a bush, and which is bordered by steep walls of trap, lava and sandstone, often arranged in a succession of high plateaus or steps, the deep, blue water of the Columbia flows with a rapid, powerful current ; it is the only life-like object in this desert. The character of the valley is much the same as far as Fort Okinakane. It occasionally widens out slightly ; again it is narrowed by the mountains pressing in. Sometimes the trail passes over the lower bottom ; at other, over very elevated and extensive terraces ; and in a few places, over dangerous points of the mountains. At one of the latter, three miles above the Eu-te-at-kwu, two of our mules were instantaneously killed by falling over a precipice, and two others seriously injured. The difficulty of the trail at this point may be imagined from the fact that we were occupied from 11 o'clock A. M., until dark, in passing the train over a distance rather less than two miles."

On the 27th of September, the explorers reached Fort Okinakane, from which point various explorations were made, but without any good results.

From this point the explorations were pursued to the north as far as  $49^{\circ} 26'$ . Nothing was discovered to indicate the possibility of a passage of the Cascade range to the north. The party returned to Colville, reaching that post on the 17th of October. On the 22d, McClellan was advised of the approach of the eastern party, and started for the rendezvous on the Spokane river ; on the 28th, he was joined by the party from the east.

The disposition for the winter was made. McClellan started for the coast by way of Walla-Walla, passing down the Cascades in an open boat, and reached Fort Vancouver, on the night of November 18th. At that point the party

was broken up, the officers and scientific corps being ordered to Olympia, to complete their reports. McClellan, says:

“Being greatly delayed in making arrangements necessary for the disposition of my own and other parties, it was only on the 16th of December that I arrived at Olympia, by way of the Cowlitz. On the 23d I left Olympia, with Mr. Minter and a small party, for Steilacoom, in a canoe. My intention was to endeavor to complete the barometrical profile of the main Yakima Pass, and examine the approaches on this side. At Steilacoom I found it impossible to make any arrangements for land transportation—the Indians representing the road impracticable for animals at that season; I therefore determined to proceed by water to the falls of the Snoqualme, and thence as far as it might seem advisable on foot. I left Steilacoom on the 29th with two canoes, reached the mouth of the Sinahomish on the 1st of January, and arrived within a mile of the Snoqualme Falls on the 7th of January. We proceeded but a few miles above the falls on foot; the trail was entirely obliterated; no Indian could be induced to accompany me to the pass as a guide. The barometer with which I was furnished had proved entirely worthless; and from the information obtained, there seemed to be no possibility of proceeding further than Lake Nook-noo; I therefore concluded that no object would be attained by keeping on, at all commensurate with the difficulty of the undertaking, and determined to retrace my steps. The Indians represented the snow to be up to the arm-pits at the Nook-noo, and as increasing thence to the pass, at the summit of which it would be found to be about twenty-five feet in depth. Mr. Tinkham found but seven feet at the summit on the 21st of January; yet I am of the opinion that in the most unfavorable portions of ordinary winters, the statement of the Indians will be found to be quite near the truth; at all events, I do not think that any important conclusion should be based on the results of Mr. Tinkham’s trip; they ought to be verified later in the year, and, if possible, during a winter not so unusually dry as this was, up to the time of Mr. Tinkham’s passage. For a winter station, with the object of examining the depth of snow, the prairie at the foot of the Nook-noo Falls would be a proper position.

"The valley of the Sinahomish and Snoqualme is of pure sand, covered with an inch or two of decomposed vegetable matter, with the exception of a small prairie on the right bank of the Snoqualme, some ten miles below, and a larger one about two miles above the falls.

"There may be more of these small prairies, of which I heard nothing. Some are said to exist on the Skywhamish. The bluffs of the stream are generally of sand, clay and gravel; occasionally of conglomerate and argillaceous rock.

"If there is any coal near the Sinahomish, it will probably be found at some distance from the river, in a bluff about twelve miles from the mouth. The timber in the valley is generally poor; it principally consists of cotton-wood, maple and alder; the fir and cedar are generally very indifferent; in some small tracts they are good. The bottom is usually wide, flat, and subject to overflow. There are extensive cranberry swamps near the mouth of the Sinahomish. This stream has three outlets, and has formed a low, sandy delta. The Sinahomish is navigable for small steamers for about twelve miles from its mouth; it forks about eighteen miles from the mouth, the Skywhamish being rather the larger fork of the two. Below the forks, the average width of the Sinahomish is some fifty yards. The Snoqualme is much obstructed by rapids, which increase in number and strength as the falls are approached. I estimated the height of the falls at from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and fifty feet; they are exceedingly beautiful. The ledge over which the river passes at this point is of conglomerate. Similar falls exist at the foot of Lake Nook-noo, on the Skywhamish, the Stoluquamish and Skagitt. On the 12th we encamped on the head of MacDonough's island, intending to proceed to Bellingham bay; but during that night six inches of snow fell, and during the next day so violent a gale blew from the north that our canoes could not proceed. On the 14th we turned back, and reached Olympia on the 21st of January. During this trip the weather was intensely cold, the thermometer being as low as zero; we endured some discomfort from snow, cold rains and sleet.

"Before I left Vancouver for Olympia, Mr. Gibbs went to Astoria with the intention of attempting to pass from there,

*via* Shoalwater bay and the Willopah river, direct to Olympia. The trail being entirely overgrown by vine maple, it was impossible for him to get through at that season of the year with the provisions he was obliged to carry; it became necessary for him to turn back before he reached the head of the Willopah. His report on the subject will give the detailed information he obtained with regard to that country. I will merely state that the valley of the Willopah is about thirty miles long, by some ten or twelve in breadth; it is thickly overgrown with vine maple, and occasional large trees; the soil is rich, though somewhat light. On the Chehalis are a number of prairies, many of good soil, especially on the south fork. The whole country is, with the exception of these prairies, densely overgrown with fir, cedar and spruce. There are many mountain ridges, some of which are quite extensive. The south fork of the Chehalis and Gray's river head in a quite high peak.

"In my railroad report of February 8th, I gave my reasons for considering Seattle as the best terminus for a railway on the eastern shore of the sound. In any future examinations it would be advantageous to examine a line leading to Port Discovery. The advantages of that harbor, both as to its situation and its facilities for perfect defense, by permanent works, entitle it to consideration. It seems to be fully adapted to the purpose of a great naval establishment."

The country to the east of the Cascade range is represented as generally barren, unfit for agriculture, and poor for grazing purposes. Even the lumber business would not pay. The Indians were represented as harmless and poor. The report says:

"With the exception of the Yakimas, they are very poor. Their food consists of salmon, berries and potatoes. The entire absence of game renders it difficult for them to obtain good clothing; during the whole trip I did not see a single deer, elk or bear—nothing larger than a wolf. Wolves, badgers, squirrels, and a few gray marmots, were the only quadrupeds. The blue and ruffed grouse, prairie-chicken and sage-fowl, abounded. To the west of the mountains the country is covered with dense fir timber, interspersed with prairies or lakes. The only good land I have seen is in the

valley of the Columbia and Cowlitz, and of some of that string of prairies which skirt the mountains from the Columbia, at least as far as the Skywhamish. The Willopah and Chehalis have also good land upon them. The prairies near the sound are uniformly of gravel, barren and worthless. Lumber and the fisheries must constitute the great interests of this portion of the Territory."

The report of February 8th, referred to by the Captain, related especially to the Snoqualme Pass, and its practicability for a railway. It was full of detail. His views were thus given upon each particular line of approach to the coast, as well as of the proper harbor on the Pacific:

"I am of the opinion that the Yakima Pass is barely practicable, and that only at a high cost of time, labor and money.

"The Columbia River Pass is not only undoubtedly practicable, but is remarkably favorable. I see no reason to believe that an equally good one can be found anywhere through the Cascade range of the Sierra Nevada; and have no hesitation in pronouncing it to be, by far, the best from  $45^{\circ} 30'$  to  $49^{\circ}$  north latitude. The question is, after all, reduced to a choice between the shorter line, high grades, a very long tunnel, and almost certain difficulty from the snow, in one case; and the longer line, low grades, little or no tunneling, and no trouble from the snow, in the other. I prefer the latter.

"The main Yakima Pass giving quite a direct line from the mouth of Snake river to Seattle, it would be desirable that an instrumental survey should be made of it, as well as of the Columbia River Pass, should any more railroad explorations be made on this line. I have mentioned Seattle as the proper terminus of the road, whether it crosses the main Yakima or by the Columbia Pass. This place is situated on Elliott bay, and is by far superior to any other harbor on the eastern shore of Puget sound—I mean here, by Puget sound, the sheet of water made up of the sound, properly so called, Admiralty inlet, Bellingham bay, etc.

"Seattle is the nearest to the Straits of Fuca. It is easily entered with any of the prevailing winds, is secure from heavy seas, and has a most excellent holding-ground of blue clay, and good depth of water—thirty fathoms. The banks are

suitable for a town; the deep water comes so near the shore that but very short wharves will be required. Semi-bituminous coal has been found within fourteen miles by water up the D'Wamish. The harbor can be defended by permanent fortifications.

"Next to this place, Steilacoom is the best terminus on the eastern shore: it is not so accessible from the straits; it affords a fair harbor for large vessels; and the 'Narrows,' which cover this harbor, are more easily defended by permanent works than are the approaches to Seattle.

"The examination of the passes of the Cascade mountains was necessarily limited to a hasty reconnoissance, for the reason that that range was almost wholly unknown—in fact, nothing whatever was known of the portion north of the Yakima Pass; and as I was under the necessity of completing the examination as far as the northern limits of our territory, I had no choice, but to ascertain, with the least possible delay, the most important facts with reference to each pass, and then push on in search of others."

The winter was passed at Olympia by the entire official corps of the expedition in making up their several reports, which were sent in by Governor Stevens. They included the labors of both the eastern and western parties, and, taken together, prove an almost exhaustive history of the physical aspects of the country bordering the forty-ninth parallel. Governor Stevens took occasion to refer, in grateful and complimentary terms, to McClellan's labors. He said:

"To Captain McClellan, his officers and men, too much credit can not be ascribed for their indefatigable exertions, and the great ability of all kinds brought to their division of the work. They can point with just pride to the determination of two practicable passes in that most formidable barrier from the Mississippi to the Pacific, of the Cascade range, and to a most admirable development of the unknown geography of the region eastward to the Columbia, as showing the unsurpassed skill and devotion which has characterized the chief of the division and all of his associates."

The Governor also referred more particularly to the Captain's winter labors, in his report to the Secretary of War, dated at Olympia, January 31st, 1854. He said:

"I have the honor to report that, as announced to you in my letter dated December 19th, Captain McClellan left Olympia on the 23d of December in a canoe, arriving at Steilacoom that evening. He received verbal instructions to carry down the lines from the Snoqualme Pass to the several good harbors of the sound, going as far northward as Bellingham bay, and to examine the several ports of the same, to determine the proper terminus of the railroad. The duty of collecting information as to a wagon-road along the shores of the sound from Steilacoom to Bellingham bay, was also assigned to him. Unable to procure horses or guides at Steilacoom, he determined to take canoes to go by the Sinahomish and Snoqualme rivers to the Snoqualme falls, and thence to ascend to the Snoqualme Pass on foot. \* \* Captain McClellan has prepared a brief report of his operations, which is extremely interesting."

The results of these laborious surveys on the northern route, formed Vol. I. of the twelve large quartos published by Congress. The other volumes were devoted to the exploration of various other routes and sections—the entire series forming a very exhaustive examination of the vast wilds between the valley of the Mississippi and the western declivity of the continent. The West Point education of the explorers proved in an eminent degree satisfactory. The surveys demonstrated that its graduates were qualified for almost any duty.

To McClellan's labors in this expedition, Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, thus referred, in his report to Congress:

"The examination of the approaches and passes of the Cascade mountains, made by Captain McClellan, of the corps of engineers, presents a reconnoissance of great value, and, though performed under adverse circumstances, exhibits all the information necessary to determine the practicability of this portion of the route, and reflects the highest credit on the capacity and resources of that officer." Nor was this the whole service of this indomitable public servant. In this report, its closing words, Secretary Davis says:—"Captain McClellan, of the corps of engineers, after the completion of his field operations, was directed to visit various railroads, and to collect information and facts established in the con-

struction and working of existing roads, to serve as data in determining the practicability of constructing and working roads over the several routes explored. The results of his inquiries will be found in a very valuable memoir herewith submitted."

This allusion to McClellan's labors, succeeding the survey, deserves further mention. He was chosen to investigate the railway system of the United States, with a view to obtain all the data on construction, equipping and running, necessary to give the Pacific Railway the benefit of all recent experience and discoveries in its construction and operation. This duty occupied the summer of 1854. McClellan not only visited the chief railways in the Northern States, and inspected them thoroughly, but he called to his aid the knowledge and assistance of several of the best engineers and machinists in the country. He thus was enabled to report in a very complete manner—his report, in truth, being a treatise on railways which possessed value as such to the railway interests of the country. The report was rendered early in November, 1854, and gave to the Department the most entire satisfaction. Its completeness proved to railroad managers and directors of so much interest, that when, a few years later, McClellan resigned his commission in the army, the railway men sought and obtained his services in the management of two of the largest enterprises in the country.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### APPOINTED ON THE EUROPEAN MILITARY COMMISSION—HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION.

IN the fall of 1854, he was assigned to the first regiment of cavalry (regulars). Under date of April 2d, 1855, he was called by the War Department to form one of a Commission of three United States army officers to proceed to Europe and the "Seat of War" for observation and study. In this important and interesting service he was associated, as the

junior officer, with Majors Delafield and Mordecai. The orders and instructions of the Commission were as follows:—

“WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, }  
“April 2d, 1855. }

“GENTLEMEN:—

“You have been selected to form a Commission to visit Europe for the purpose of obtaining information with regard to the military service in general, and especially the practical workings of the changes which have been introduced, of late years, into the military systems of the principal nations of Europe.

“Some of the objects to which it is peculiarly desirable to direct your attention may be indicated as follows:—

“The organization of armies and of the departments for furnishing supplies of all kinds to the troops, especially in field service. The manner of distributing supplies.

“The fitting up of vessels for transporting men and horses, and the arrangements for embarking and disembarking them.

“The medical and hospital arrangements, both in permanent hospitals and in the field. The kind of ambulances or other means used for transporting the sick and wounded.

“The kind of clothing and camp equipage used for service in the field.

“The kinds of arms, ammunition, and accouterments used in equipping troops for the various branches of service, and their adaptation to the purposes intended. In this respect, the arms and equipments of cavalry of all kinds will claim your particular attention.

“The practical advantages and disadvantages attending the use of the various kinds of rifle-arms which have been lately introduced extensively in European warfare.

“The nature and efficacy of ordnance and ammunition employed for field and siege operations, and the practical effect of the late changes partially made in the French field artillery.

“The construction of permanent fortifications, the arrangement of new systems of sea-coast and land defenses, and the kinds of ordnance used in the armament of them—the Lancaster gun, and other rifle-cannon, if any are used.

“The composition of trains for siege operations, the kind and quantity of ordnance, the engineering operations of a siege in all its branches, both of attack and defense.

“The composition of bridge-trains, kinds of boats, wagons, etc.

“The construction of casemated forts, and the effects produced on them in attacks by land and water.

“The use of camels for transportation, and their adaptation to cold and mountainous countries.

“To accomplish the objects of your expedition most effectually in the shortest time, it appears to be advisable that you should

proceed as soon as possible to the theater of war in the Crimea, for the purpose of observing the active operations in that quarter. You will then present yourselves to the commanders of the several armies, and request from them such authority and facilities as they may be pleased to grant for enabling you to make the necessary observations and inquiries.

"You may find it practicable to enter Sebastopol, and to proceed through Russia to St. Petersburg, with the view of visiting the works and seeing the operations which may be carried on in the Baltic. Should it not be possible or advisable to enter Russia in this way, you may be able to accomplish the same object by passing through Austria and Prussia. In returning from Russia, you will have an opportunity of seeing the military establishments of Prussia, Austria, France and England.

"The arrangements of your journey must be regulated in a general measure by the state of affairs existing on your arrival in Europe, and the information you may acquire there.

"Letters are herewith furnished to you for our ministers in Europe, requesting them to furnish you the aid in their power in accomplishing the objects of your mission.

"Funds for defraying the expenses of your journey are placed in the hands of Major Mordecai, who will disburse and account for them. You are authorized to use a portion of these funds in purchasing for this Department new books, drawings, and patterns of arms and equipments, which you may consider of sufficient value in our service to warrant the expenditure.

"Reserving until your return to the United States a full account of your expedition and the information you may obtain, you will report to the Secretary of War, from time to time, as opportunity may offer, the progress of your journey, and remarks on the subjects within the scope of your instructions which you may wish to communicate.

"All correspondence of this kind, proceeding either from the Commission jointly or from any member of it, will be forwarded, according to military usage and regulation, through the senior officer present.

"It is desirable that you should return home by the 1st of November, 1855. If you should find it essential for effecting the objects of your mission in a satisfactory manner to remain longer than that time, you will report the circumstances so as to give time for an answer in due season.

"Reliance is placed on your judgment and discretion to conduct your movements in such a manner as to give no reasonable ground for suspicion or offense to the military or other government authorities with whom you may have intercourse.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"JEFFERSON DAVIS, *Secretary of War.*

"Major R. DELAFIELD, Major A. MORDECAI, Captain G. B. McCLELLAN, *United States Army.*"

The American ministers at London and Paris were at once informed of the nature and purposes of the Commission. Application was also made to the ministers resident at Washington of England, France, Russia and Austria for such letters to their Governments and persons in authority as they might choose to give. All answered cheerfully and satisfactorily but the French minister. Letters were supplied which would enable the Commission to accomplish its purposes fully, by giving the *entrée* to their military establishments, camps, forts, armories, navy yards, etc. The refusal of the French minister to accord the courtesy of letters introductory was a foreshadowing of the reserve toward the Commission afterward practiced by the French Minister of War and Marshal Pelissier—both of whom studiously sought to deny the American officers the means of observation consistent with their mission. This reserve almost amounted to the *cut direct*; and it will be long before the engineer corps of the United States army will forget it.

As a further comment on the Secretary's plans regarding the mission, Mr. Davis' letter to the French minister, M. de Sartiges, may be referred to. The minister, in answer to the application for letters introductory, had asked the Secretary if by the words "*seat of war*" was meant "the camp of the allies in the Crimea and no other place whatever." Davis replied that the phrase was designed to cover the entire field of active operations, in order that useful observations might be made wherever opportunity offered—that the first point to which the officers would be instructed to proceed would be Sebastopol, before which the allied armies of England, France and Sardinia were then operating—that they would announce their arrival to the commanding Generals, and do nothing while there without the proper assent; and when they retired it would be by the same route by which they had approached the lines of operation, or by some other to which no objections should be made—that the second point to be visited was Cronstadt, where the Commission would pursue the same course of military propriety prescribed for their conduct in the camp of the allies—that, if other fields promised opportunities "for improving our knowledge of the science of war," it was necessary that they should be made available if

possible. Mr. Davis further took the undignified liberty of declaring to the Frenchman that the character of the officers selected for the mission gave a full assurance that they would comport themselves as became educated soldiers. No other minister asked *explanations* of our Government, and it is to be regretted that the Secretary of War found it necessary to offer to M. de Sartiges the explanations very politely, but, nevertheless, very persistently demanded. The reception afterward given the Commission by the French emperor and Minister of War was such as to render it a source of regret to the American people, as well as to the army, that the Secretary should have made a second application to M. de Sartiges for letters of commend to the French Government. The positively discourteous conduct of that Government will appear in the recitation of the diary of the Commission, as afterward recorded by Major Delafield (the senior officer) in his report to the Secretary. Deferring to his right of seniority, the other members of the mission left the record of the incidents of their journey to Major Delafield; we, therefore, have no personal expression from McClellan regarding his views of the reception accorded the American engineers by the French military and diplomatic authorities. We can imagine that his high sense of honor and of military etiquette must have rebelled at the cool indifference—to call it by no other name—of the French Marshal Pelissier, and M. de Walewski, the French Minister of War.

The Commission sailed from Boston, April 11th, *via* London. On the 27th of that month an interview was had with Lord Clarendon. It was highly satisfactory. The minister volunteered to obtain personally from the War Minister (Lord Panmure) the necessary letters of authorization to Lord Raglan. "On the 29th," the report by Major Delafield says, "Lord Clarendon inclosed letters of introduction to Lord Raglan and Sir Edmund Lyons, adding, if in any way he could be useful to Major Delafield and his brother officers, or assist the mission with which they were charged, he begged that they would freely command his services. Introductory letters to the Admiral of the Baltic fleet, and to the officers in command at Constantinople, were requested, which received the like courteous attention."

This courtesy and kindly feeling of the English Prime Minister was in such contrast with the conduct of the French authorities as must have left no doubt on the minds of the Commission of the truth of the proposition, that, if John Bull was the hereditary enemy of his rebellious son, the English people were his friends—if the French Government was the hereditary friend of the American Government, French despotism was at heart an enemy.

The Commission hastened to Paris—anxious to expedite observations in France, and the journey to the seat of war. Major Delafield wrote:—"Changes in the ministry in France caused some delay in obtaining an interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of that Government, to whom the Commission could alone make known its wishes and obtain such official recognition as would secure to it admission to their military establishments. Through our minister, Judge Mason, we had an interview with Count Walewski, the successor to Drouyn de L'Huys. Count Walewski at once promptly stated that Judge Mason had explained to him that the Commission wished to go the Crimea; that he would be very happy to give letters to the commanding General there which would procure us the necessary facilities, but that there was an imperative rule in the French military service that no foreign officer could be permitted to go into their camp, and afterward to pass into that of the enemy; that, therefore, it would be necessary for the members of the Commission to give a promise to our minister that we would not go from the French camp to *any other part of the Crimea*. The Commission stated distinctly such was not its purpose, and showed him the letter of the Secretary of War, of the 5th of April, to M. de Sartiges, as the best explanation of our intentions; that the Commission had no intention of going directly from their camp to their enemy's, or from the camp of the allies *into* Sebastopol; but that it was quite as interesting to them to see the defenses as the attack, and that they *did* propose, after visiting the allied camp, to go into Russia; and, after visiting the places on the Baltic, they might wish, *after some months interval*, to visit Sebastopol. Count Walewski replied that such an arrangement would not affect the question; that no one could, as a right, ask the privilege of going into their

camps ; that it might be refused and had been refused *without assigning any reason* ; but that the emperor, wishing to show his good disposition toward the United States, would willingly consent to our going there *on the conditions* which he (Count Walewski) had mentioned ; that if the Commission chose first to go to the Russian side it was no concern of the French. Count Walewski requested the Commission to consider the matter and inform him of its determination through Judge Mason.

“The Commission then stated that there were many military establishments and objects of interest, in a military point of view, in France, which it would be glad to see on its journey out of the country, or on returning to it. To which Count Walewski replied that on that subject there would be no difficulty and the permission would be accorded with pleasure. In the course of this conversation Count Walewski stated that the imperative rule established by the French Government precluded going to any Russian post or army in the Crimea at *any* time after having visited the allied army operating in that quarter, and that *the rule would apply to entering the Crimea, after conforming with the instructions of the War Department (of the United States) in visiting Cronstadt.*”

The Commission very properly refused to accept the contingencies and restrictions which the French minister proposed as the price of his letters introductory, and soon informed the Count, through Judge Mason, of its determination to proceed to the allied camp without the letters of permit to the French camp with the restrictions imposed. The Commission, however, signified its wish to accept the Count's permit to visit the naval and military establishments in France, on their return from the East. “This determination was communicated to Count Walewski through Judge Mason, with the request that he would forward to the Commission by mail the authority of the French Government to visit such of the enumerated establishments as it might be pleased to grant.”

That authority never came, as the sequel will show. It was not until the 28th of May that this fruitless waiting upon the pleasure of the French minister to obtain a simple answer to a simple request was so far rendered as to permit the departure of the Commission for the East. A few days in

England had sufficed to place the American officers in possession of the most efficient and courteous documents necessary to fulfill the objects of the Commission where English authority prevailed; a four weeks' stay in Paris had not sufficed to extract from the French Government a single courtesy or document of favor—had not obtained for the United States Commission any more recognition than would have been accorded to any of those mere personal adventurers seeking to visit the Crimea as a matter of curiosity. Such a reception of a French Commission to the United States Government would have been considered a national affront.

The course of the journey to the East was to St. Petersburg *via* Prussia. At Berlin the reception was very kind, both by the Prussian Government and by the Russian minister to Berlin, Baron de Budberg—to whom the Russian minister. at Washington had accredited the members of the Commission. Of Prussian civility the report said:—"While in Berlin, through the kindness of our minister, Mr. Vroom, the Commission had an interview with Baron Manteuffel, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Prussia, who, in the most prompt manner, stated that he had in some measure anticipated the wishes of the Commission, and had written to the Minister of War in relation to obtaining information in Prussia on the art of war as practiced by them, and, in conformity with our request, he would give us authority to visit all such places as the Commission would name on its route into Prussia on returning from St. Petersburg—it having been explained to him that the intention was first to go to the Crimea *via* Warsaw, and thereafter to St. Petersburg; and that he would give authority to visit any other of the military establishments of Prussia on making known the wish to do so, after returning to Berlin."

Calling upon the Russian minister, it was found that he, in like manner, had informed his Government of the approach of the Commission, and had obtained in advance of their visit an authorization to extend letters which would facilitate the objects of the mission. The Baron called upon the Commission, in person, after their first interview, to deliver a sealed package for the Baron Krusenstein, at Warsaw.

On the 4th of June, Warsaw was reached, and the letters

commendatory were dispatched to the Baron. Also, on the 6th of June, the Commission inclosed for his inspection and the information to Prince Paskievitch a copy of documents from the American Government and from Baron Stoeckl—the Russian minister at Washington—regarding the powers and purposes of the Commission—at the same time requesting from the Prince the necessary facilities for expediting the journey and for attaining the objects of the mission. The Baron replied that, the Prince being absent from Warsaw, it was not in his power to authorize the Commission to proceed to the Crimea, nor to inspect the fortifications of Warsaw and Modlin. The Baron, however, promised to write or to see the military governor of Warsaw, who, no doubt, would open the fortifications under his charge to the American officers.

From some singular omission the Baron Krusenstein had not been officially informed of the official character of the mission. The letter and inclosures of June 6th were to give him that formal knowledge. He received the documents from the officers in person, June 7th. After a perusal of their letter he courteously returned the documents as unnecessary—their letter sufficed.

June 9th—the Prince having returned—authority was given to visit the fortifications at Warsaw and Modlin, and a Colonel of Engineers ordered to accompany the Commission and explain to them every thing desired. The Prince, however, informed the Americans that he could give no authority for them to proceed direct to the Crimea, and recommended them to proceed to St. Petersburg, where, alone, authority to visit the seat of war could be obtained. This news was equally a surprise and an annoying disappointment to the anxious officers, since the delay would compel the loss of precious time—any moment might announce the general and final assault of Sebastopol, which they were so solicitous to witness. There was no other course left but to follow the Prince's advice, though the fact that the Russian Government had been previously officially notified, by its minister at Washington, as well as by its minister at Berlin, of the character of the mission, and therefore well knew its requirements, and yet had laid an embargo on it at Warsaw, was evidence that it, like France, was not inclined to open its lines to the

scrutiny of the American engineers. It was this consciousness which so disappointed the Commissioners. The report says:

"Although much profitable information was obtained at Warsaw and Modlin, the great object of the Commission had not yet been entered upon—both France and Russia interposing unexplained difficulties through the meshes of diplomacy, all of which would have been avoided by going, as many civilians had done and continued to do, direct to Sebastopol, *via* Constantinople. This course was, however, denied to the Commission, from the very fact of being in a national capacity for public purposes, which could only be recognized and sanctioned through the formula of diplomacy."

The three officers found palliation for their disappointment in the prospect of witnessing the descent of the English fleet on Cronstadt.\* The senior officer said:—"The probability of witnessing a bombardment of the works of Cronstadt by the allied fleet, and the great military events in that quarter, together with the fact of our instructions requiring a study and examination of these important sea-coast defenses, in some measure compensated for the disappointment experienced in not going direct to Sebastopol."

June 19th found the three engineers at St. Petersburg. An interview was obtained with the Prime Minister, Count Nesselrode, June 25th, when the object of the mission was stated at length, and the request again preferred to be permitted to proceed to Sebastopol. No answer was then given.

June 26th the Commission was, by special invitation of the emperor, present at a grand review. "The troops being drawn up on three sides of a square, the Minister of War, Count Dalgourouki, conducted us to the center, the Emperor's station, and there presenting us, a short conversation ensued—the interesting part of which was his assent to our going to Cronstadt, and ending with a declaration on his part of the hope that the United States and Russia would continue always in peace and friendship. In the afternoon of the same day Lieutenant-Colonel Obrescöff, of the Guard, and aid-

\* Admiral Napier, it will be remembered, had promised the English people, on the day of sailing, to "be in Cronstadt or in Heaven in three weeks." Although the old soldier did not enter Cronstadt at all, we will not doubt that he entered the other port named. As he, not long afterward, passed the waters of the limitless sea, let us hope heaven opened wide its gates at his soul's approach.

de-camp of Prince Dalgourouki, called upon us by direction of the Minister of War, to accompany us to the several military establishments in the vicinity that we had expressed the desire to examine, including Cronstadt. During the absence of the Minister of War, Colonel Obrescöff was directed to report to Baron Leiven, the Adjutant-General, to whose care and attention our business had been confided."

These attentions were unremitting, up to July 9th. Under the guidance of Colonel Obrescöff, every leading fortress and military establishment in the vicinity of St. Petersburg were examined minutely and notes of the observations were prepared at length. As those fortifications were among the best in the world (at that time reputed to be the best), the privilege conceded was one which afforded the Commission equal pleasure and profit.

Still no answer to the request preferred of Count Nesselrode, to be permitted to visit the Crimea. Baron Leiven had also been solicited to use his influence with the Emperor for the permit required, but no little password came. July 9th the Commission wrote to the acting War Minister that, their labors being completed in the vicinity of the capital, they would be happy to know what arrangements were to be made for their departure. "On the 13th of July Baron Leiven called on us and then stated that, on the subject of Sebastopol, Sveaborg and Revel, he must speak with frankness and sincerity to us, that his country had no secrets or information on military science to withhold from us, as we had seen by the manner in which their establishments here were thrown open to our examination; but that the commanding officers of those places had requested that strangers or other persons not concerned in the operations should not be permitted to visit them, as such visits occasioned them a great deal of embarrassment; \* \* \* and, although the Emperor might overrule such objections, yet he felt bound to pay deference to the views and wishes of his commanders placed in such responsible positions; therefore our request *could not* be granted; that, as to forts of Sebastopol, on seeing Cronstadt we would see the best works that had been constructed for harbor defenses; that the forts of Revel were of no interest, and those of Sveaborg were old Swedish works on a system

no longer followed, and that those of Sebastopol were on the same plan as those of Cronstadt, but of inferior material, being of limestone mixed with sand." All of which was conclusive; there was no appeal.

July 14th, a drill of cavalry was expressly ordered for the Commissioners' attention—affording a fine opportunity for McClellan's quick eye to catch those "points" which he was so soon to adapt to the American service. On the 15th, the Camp Crasno Cello was visited, where fifty thousand infantry and artillery were quartered in field life. On the 17th, Cronstadt was again visited for more particular inspection of certain sections. A number of officers of the engineer corps accompanied the Americans, giving their information fully and cordially. What a contrast with the reception of the Americans, a few months later, by the French officers!

July 19th, the Commission proceeded to Moscow, where it was received with every attention. Under the guidance of Prince Ouroussoff, the tour of observation was made—including the Kremlin.

August 2d, the Commission left St. Petersburg for the South, by way of Prussia and Vienna. At Königsburg, the extensive system of fortification then under construction was carefully inspected. At Dantzic, the old and late defenses of that famous city were studied. At Posen, the great fortress was thoroughly explored. All these works embodied the German system of construction, in the completest degree. At the mouth of the Oder, the fine casemated sea-coast defenses were particularly observed. A special telegram from the Prussian Minister of War opened them for inspection. To the great world they were sealed. At Schwedt, the school of equitation (horsemanship) was visited and its several departments investigated with much interest.

On the 25th of August the Commission returned to renew its request for admittance to the arsenals, barracks, etc., in Berlin and Spandau. Up to September 4th no answer had been received, when the American desire to see all induced the officers to call in person upon the Minister of War, Count Waldersee. He very promptly gave them special tickets of admission to "eleven enumerated establishments." This was the *open sesame* which threw wide the doors of manufactories

laboratories and magazines not often explored by strangers. The favor was still further increased. Baron Manteuffel, through Governor Vroom, took occasion "to respond to each and every request, authorizing drawings of barracks, of the arsenal at Spandau and its machinery, with books of regulations and other matters, to be furnished on the personal application of the Commission." More could not have been granted; and the report made by the officers, individually, upon their return to the United States, proved how fully they profited by the favors extended by the cordial Germans.

September 16th found the Commission at Constantinople, having made the journey *via* Dresden, Trieste and Smyrna. Baron Tetas, the Sardinian minister, supplied the Commission with cordial letters to General La Marmora, Commander-in-Chief of the Piedmontese army. The English naval authorities gave the Americans passage on the first steamer for Balaklava, where they arrived October 8th—nearly three months later than was contemplated when the instructions of the Commission were made up at Washington. The time was lost chiefly in dancing attendance upon diplomats.

The Commander-in-Chief of the English forces in the East, General Simpson (Lord Raglan having retired), learning of the arrival of the Commission, immediately dispatched two of his staff to conduct the Americans to quarters which he had assigned to them, on Cathcart Hill—a location commanding, to a great extent, the field of operations. The report by Major Delafield says:

"He caused us to be provided with rations for ourselves and servants and forage for our horses during our entire sojourn in the Crimea. Every official and personal facility and kindness were extended to us by the officers of the English army; and to General La Marmora we were indebted for his courteous attention in detailing an officer of rank from his staff to conduct us through the Sardinian camps and outposts. During the whole period the Commission remained in the Crimea an officer of the English army, under the authority of General Simpson, was our daily companion to escort us wherever there was any thing of interest to be seen, accompanied on several occasions by their engineer officers."

The usage received at the hands of the French General,

in chief command, was scarcely polite. Several efforts were made to obtain an interview with Marshal Pelissier, "to pay our respects to the successful General of the campaign, to explain to him the orders of our Government and the fact of not having to that date received the authority of the French Government to visit their camps, as anticipated from the conversations with Count Walewski, at Paris, in May." The entire story of the consideration extended to the Commission by the French may be given in the word—non-recognition. With the exception of kindness at the hands of a few officers in the engineer corps no favor was bestowed upon the Americans. Pelissier treated them with downright discourtesy.

"The result was," the report said, "that the Commission confined its examination to the camps, dépôts, parks, workshops, etc., of the English, Sardinian and Turkish armies, never entering the French camps in the Crimea except on visits of courtesy."

The observations being as complete as circumstances would admit, the Commission departed from the Crimea November 2d, returning again to Constantinople, where (and at Scutari) the hospitals and dépôts of the allies were inspected, their systems learned, and many useful sanitary hints obtained as well as imparted. The defenses of Varna were also visited.

The Commission returned to Vienna *via* Trieste and the Semmering railway. This remarkable railway is one of the wonders of modern engineering skill, and our officers took quite as much interest in its examination as in the study of fortifications and arsenals. December 16th Vienna was reached.

The reception of the Americans by the Austrian authorities is thus chronicled in the report: "From the Grand Dukes William and Leopold—the former as commander of the army and the latter as chief engineer—we received authority to visit their military and naval establishments in Venice, Verona, Mantua and Milan, which occupied us between the 14th and 25th of January. At Venice the Governor ordered an officer of engineers to accompany and throw open to us all matter of interest in that city and vicinity, at the same ordering his steam yacht to convey us about the lagunes and harbor defenses. At Verona we were most kindly received by the

veteran hero, Marshal Radetsky, who contributed in every way to the attainment of our wishes, as well as to our personal gratification. An officer of engineers was here also ordered to accompany us to the military establishments, which, being recent modifications on an extensive scale, according to the present German system of fortification ingrafted on the old bastion system, were of especial interest. To our minister at Vienna, Mr. Jackson, we took occasion to say that, in all our intercourse with the functionaries charged with the various establishments we had been authorized to visit, facilities and courteous receptions had invariably been extended to us; and that our intercourse with the officers of the Austrian Government and army had been every way agreeable, calling for an expression of our most respectful acknowledgments." The importance of the works at the chief cities named, viz.: Venice, Verona, Milan, etc., in the scale of military *materiel* and structure, rendered their study even of greater value than any works yet opened to their inspection—Cronstadt not excepted. The courtesy of the Austrians was, therefore, all the more gratefully accepted.

The Commission proceeded to France *via* Genoa—at which city the fortifications were visited. Arrived at Toulon, the permission accorded by Count Walewski, in May, to visit the fortifications and constructions in France, was so far accepted as to induce the inspection of the fine works, military and naval, at that old seaport. No special attention was given the Commission—not an officer offering to conduct them. Printed tickets of admission were given the Americans—such as were given to all visitors—and a *porter* passed around with them, as their escort of honor. We can hardly wonder that, as private gentlemen as well as the official representatives of a great and powerful Government, the members of the Commission felt a degree of mortification at their "French reception." The inspection made, however, was very minute, as the report of Major Delafield, on that fine naval depôt, testifies.

Spending a day or two at Marseilles, to inspect the system of cavalry and supplies transportation (to which McClellan devoted special attention), the three officers arrived, January 8th, at Lyons—the city of fortresses. Marshal Castillon gave

the Americans the necessary permission of visit, and, accompanied by a non-commissioned officer the tour of inspection was made. Belfort was also opened to them by tickets of admission. At both Lyons and Belfort the systems of Vauban, and of the more recent constructors and architects, were the theme of observation and verification.

At the memorable old frontier town of Strasbourg—redolent of historical associations and noted in song—General Grouchy exercised his rights as commander to detail an officer of engineers and one of artillery to accompany the Commission in its tour through fortresses, hospitals, barracks, shops, etc.

Proceeding to the German territory again, the officers took in Rastadt on their route to Coblenz. No authority from the German authorities having been given, the extensive fortifications at Rastadt were but glanced at, from a mere walk through the city. At Coblenz, the authority of Count Waldersee again threw open the strongholds of Prussian science to their eyes and notes.

Proceeding to Cologne, no permit for its inspection having been forwarded to the commandant, that noted stronghold of old engineering genius was not examined.

At Liege, in Belgium, the national foundry of artillery and the manufactory for small-arms, were carefully inspected—two days being spent in those busy and finely-developed centers of Dutch skill in the construction of implements of war.\*

The 1st of March found the Commission once more in Paris. Armed with a general permit, and having, as a special honor, a *sergeant* for a guide, the Commission inspected Vincennes, where two days were fully occupied. A personal application to the Minister of War failed to obtain a permit to visit the dépôts and foundries of artillery. These were sealed to all scrutiny. Cherbourg was examined by the general

\* The town of Liege is quite celebrated for its *specialite* of arms. Besides the Government foundry and shops, numerous private manufactories are in operation, producing immense quantities of muskets, rifles, pistols, swords, sabers, etc., which have found their way to all parts of the civilized (and therefore *fighting*?) world. The number stated as manufactured in 1854 was 562,000 stands of small-arms. The business has increased yearly since that time. Under the impetus of the demand in Central Europe and Italy, in 1858-9, the Liege shops turned out over 1,300,000 stands of arms. In 1860-61 the call of America again threw increased zeal into the shops; and it is estimated that over 2,000,000 stands were finished in the twelve months of 1861. Most of these arms found their way to the loyal States. To England belongs the honor of having supplied the disloyal States.

permit granted all strangers, in company with a non-commissioned attendant. The Havre defenses were explored in the same manner.

It must have been with a sense of relief that the Commission again struck English soil after their few days' sojourn under the reign of French mystery and exclusiveness.\*

The 24th of March found them in London. Up to April 12th, owing to some fault of the "circumlocution office," the officers did not receive the necessary documents from the War Department which were required to give them the right of entry and inspection to the English establishments, military and naval. "On the 13th," the report says, "Mr. Dallas received a note from the foreign office, assuring him that orders had been issued by the War Department and Board of Admiralty for our admission to the naval and military establishments enumerated in our request; and thereafter we visited the arsenal and dock-yards at Woolwich and vessels at Portsmouth, and the defenses near Yarmouth, on the Isle of Wight, and received every courtesy and facility we could desire from the military and naval officers at those stations, in furthering the object of our visit. The last official act of the Government was an invitation, through Mr. Dallas, to be present at the review of the fleet at Portsmouth. When at Liverpool we received a communication from General Wetherell, dated the previous day (April 17th), from the Horse-Guards, stating that the Field Marshal and Commander-in-Chief, having learned that our minister had made known our desire to see the military establishments of England, he had ordered that every facility should be afforded us in our visits on receiving an intimation of the stations we intended to visit; and, understanding that we were then at Liverpool, Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith, Bart., G. C. B., commanding at Manchester, had been directed to place a staff officer in communication with us with a view to our admission

\* However well disposed the *people* of France may be toward the people of other nations, it is painfully evident that they live under an iron rule. The almost numberless fortresses and foundries of the Napoleon dynasty are quite as much for defense against its own subjects as against the outer world. The rule adopted for the government of the French army—behind which rule the authorities, from Count Walewski down to a grenadier, took refuge to excuse their discourtesies—unquestionably *is* founded in the "necessities" of their Government, which depends for its existence upon the *secret* power by which Napoleon controls his military resources.

to the establishments situated in the northern and midland districts of England. An officer of the Dragoon Guards called to accompany us and carry into effect the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief."

The kind offer came too late, as the Commission had already prepared for the return home. It sailed, April 19th, from Liverpool—reaching the United States safely after an absence of but a few days over a year.

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## CHAPTER V.

THE REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION—MAJOR DELAFIELD'S REPORT—MC CLELLAN'S REPORT—ITS IMPORTANT CHARACTER—HIS DETAIL OF THE OPERATIONS BEFORE SEBASTOPOL—HIS VIEWS ON THE FORTIFICATION OF OUR COASTS AND HARBORS—HIS SUGGESTIONS FOR AN ARMY—MAJOR MORDECAI'S REPORT.

THE reports made by the officers of the Commission after their return form volumes of great quarto, in the "Congressional" publication. They are most elaborately illustrated, while in subject matter they form the most valuable contribution to our military literature which has been made for many years—more valuable, indeed, than any works issued during the last twenty years, by European writers and engineers, which are available to our countrymen.

The volume from the hands of Major Delafield was devoted to a very exhaustive sketch of the Crimean campaign by the allies, giving, as an accompaniment, minute details of the operations, from the landing at Balaklava to the final assault, with much *aside* information, as well as elaborate maps and views of the works of both Russians and allies. It also made a *specialité* of fortification construction, arms and arrangement; and, in this respect, becomes a virtual text-book to American engineers and constructionists. As the Commission had the *entrée* to all the most noted fortifications of the continent, as well as to the arsenals, foundries and laboratories of the Prussians, Austrians and English, the skilled eyes and hands of the American engineers were not remiss in noting, with

great minuteness, all the new and useful things appertaining to the art of war which came before them. The United States Government certainly never placed money to a wiser use than in the direction of that Commission and the publication of its three elaborate reports.

The volume from the hands of Captain McClellan was the first of the three submitted (February 25th, 1857). Its nature will be inferred from its contents, which we quote as showing its comprehensive yet minute character :

"Report on the operations in the Crimea, with a historical sketch of the campaign and strictures on its conduct.

"Reports upon the European troops, embracing a *resumé* of the systems of the Russians, Prussians, Austrians, French and English.

"Report upon the French, Austrian, Prussian and Sardinian infantry, with a digest of their composition, regulations, etc.

"Report upon the Russian army, comprising, 1st, organization, uniform, recruiting, rations, etc. ; 2d, the instruction and tactics of cavalry ; 3d, the equipments, arms, stables, horses, etc., of cavalry ; 4th, on the Russian infantry.

"Report on the Prussian cavalry.

"Report on the Austrian cavalry.

"Report on the French cavalry.

"Report on the English and Sardinian cavalry.

"Report on the United States cavalry."

This was also followed (in the same volume) by "*The Regulations and Instructions for the Field Service of Cavalry, in time of war, for the United States Army.*"

The several reports were very full expositions of the several systems in use in the best armies, and serve to show how intimately acquainted Captain McClellan was with the subject in all its features. His final report, devoted to the United States cavalry, was an embodiment of his suggestions in regard to its reorganization, so as to adapt it to the improved condition of that arm of service as perfected by the European nations. The last section of the volume, as stated, was devoted to a manual of instruction and regulations for the United States army cavalry. In the preface modestly announcing his work the author said :—

\* "I have translated from the original Russian, and have

endeavored to adapt them (the regulations, etc.) to our own organization, preserving the original arrangement, and adding merely a few minor details suggested by the recollections of former readings and of service in the field. It is more than probable that they will be found to fill usefully an important want in our military literature; while they undoubtedly are based upon true military principles."

This adverts to the fact of the writer's acquaintance with the Russian language. While in Russia the Captain was an arduous student of that uncouth and severe idiom of the descendants of the Tartars; and so readily mastered its lingual and idiomatic structure as to be able to converse without difficulty with the native Russ. Already a thorough French scholar from his West Point education, with a good command of Spanish, and a reading knowledge of German, the acquisition of Russian served to elevate the Captain into the category of linguistic scholars.

The "regulations" have since been republished in convenient 12mo form for use as a text-book in the service, which it has become—making the second manual from his hand.

The portion of the Commission report possessed of *popular* interest is that devoted to the "Operations in the Crimea," wherein the Captain at once becomes the critic and the historian. The paper now possesses a two-fold interest, since the once Captain of cavalry has become the Captain of a country—the author of campaigns and the director of armies, who, in his turn, must pass through the ordeals of criticism and stricture. The historical sketch is stated with clearness and directness. The close, concise manner in which he, as author, treats every subject upon which he writes, indicates the nature of the man.

We may quote from his narrative a few paragraphs that dispel some of the illusions which prevailed regarding the formidable character of the Russian defenses at Sebastopol:

"From the preceding hasty and imperfect account of the defenses of Sebastopol, it will appear how little foundation there was for the generally received accounts of the stupendous dimensions of the works, and of new systems of fortifications brought into play. The plain truth is that these defenses were simply *temporary* fortifications of rather greater dimensions than usual, and that not a single new principle of

engineering was there developed. It is true that there were several novel minor details, such as the *rope mantelet* (a huge apron of hemp ropes to shield the men at the guns from the rifle-shots of the French sharp-shooters), the use of iron tanks, etc.; but the whole merit consisted in the admirable adaptation of well-known principles to the peculiar locality and circumstances of the case. Neither can it be asserted that the plans of the various works were perfect. On the contrary, there was no impropriety in believing that if Todleben (the celebrated Russian engineer-in-chief) was called upon to do the work over again, he would probably introduce close-flanking arrangements.

"These remarks are not intended to, nor can they, detract from the reputation of the Russian-engineer. His labors and their results will be handed down in history as the most triumphant and enduring monument of the value of fortifications, and his name must ever be placed in the first rank of military engineers. But, in our admiration of the talent and energy of the engineer, it must not be forgotten that the inert masses which he raised would have been useless without the skillful artillery and heroic infantry who defended them. Much stronger places than Sebastopol have often fallen under far less obstinate and well-combined attacks than that to which it was subjected. There can be no danger in expressing the conviction that the siege of Sebastopol called forth the most magnificent defense of fortifications that has ever yet occurred.

"This would seem to be the proper place to notice a popular fallacy which, for a time at least, gained extensive credence. It was, that the siege of Sebastopol proved the superiority of temporary (earthen) fortifications over those of a permanent nature. It is easy to show that it proved nothing of the kind—that it only demonstrated temporary works, in the hands of a brave and skillful garrison, are susceptible of a longer resistance than was generally supposed. They were attacked as field-works never were before, and were defended as field-works never had been defended. The main difference between properly-constructed permanent fortifications (intended to resist a siege) and temporary works is, that the latter seldom present an insuperable obstacle

against assault, while the former always do. In addition, permanent works have a better command over an adjacent country and are more carefully and perfectly planned. The masonry walls, which render an assault impossible, can not be seen from the distance, and can be destroyed only by establishing batteries on the crests of the glacis or the edge of the ditch; the earthen parapets alone being visible beyond that point, they may, until the besiegers arrive there, be regarded in the same light as field-works, with the difference that the garrison are not harassed by the necessity of constantly being prepared to repel an assault. Now, in the siege of Sebastopol, the trenches of the besiegers never reached the edge of the ditch; so that, had the fortification been a permanent one, the most difficult, slow, and dangerous part of the siege remained to be undertaken, viz.: the crowning of the covered way, the establishment of the breach batteries, the descent and passage of the ditch, and the assault of the breach; in other words, at the moment when the weakness of the temporary works became apparent and fatal, the true strength of the permanent defenses would have commenced coming into play."

This is clear, devoid of tautology, and not without the graces of composition. The ideas enunciated are of interest as showing the views of the present Commander-in-Chief regarding the proper mode of securing our seaboard from the dangers of a descent by a powerful enemy.

The narrative of the storming of the Redan is so graphic that we may here quote it, as an admirable specimen of narrative and criticism which the army of newspaper "special correspondents" would do well to study:

"A few minutes later than the assault upon the Malakoff the English attacked the Redan. The Russians being now upon the alert, they did not pass over the open space before them without loss; but the mass succeeded in crossing the ditch and in gaining the salient work. Finding themselves entirely unsupported they at once took shelter behind the traverses, from whence the examples and efforts of their officers did not avail to draw them, in order to occupy the work closing the gorge. Having in vain used every effort—having dispatched every officer of his staff to the rear urging

that supports should at once be sent up, and seeing that the Russians were now beginning to assemble in force, the commander of the English storming-party reluctantly determined to proceed himself to obtain reinforcements. Scarcely had he reached the trenches, and at last obtained authority to move up the required succor, when, upon turning to lead them forward, he saw the party he had left in the work rapidly and hopelessly driven out at the point of the bayonet. No further effort was made to carry the work. It would, in all probability, have failed, and could only have caused a useless sacrifice of men.

“The failure of the English assault may be attributed partly to the fact that their advanced trenches were too small to accommodate the requisite force without confusion, in part to their not being pushed sufficiently near the Redan, but chiefly to that total absence of conduct and skill in their arrangements for the assault which left the storming-party entirely without support. Had it been followed at once by strong reinforcements, it is almost certain that the English would have retained possession of the work.

“The two French attacks on the west of the central ravine were probably intended only as feints; at all events, the parties engaged were soon driven back to their trenches with considerable loss—having effected nothing. Their attempts on the Little Redan, and the works connecting it with the Malakoff, met with even less success than the English assault. The Russians repulsed the French with great loss, meeting with the bayonet the more adventurous men who reached the parapet. Thus, in five points out of six, the defenders were fully victorious; but, unfortunately for them, the sixth was the decisive point.

“In their admirable arrangements for the attack of the Malakoff, the French had ascertained that the Russians were in the habit of relieving the guard of the Malakoff at noon, and that the great part of the old guard marched out before the new one arrived, in order to avoid the loss which would arise from crowding the work with men; in the second place, it was determined to keep up a most violent vertical fire until the very moment of the assault—thus driving the Russians into the bomb-proofs and enabling the storming-party to enter

the work with but little opposition. The hour of noon was, therefore, selected for the assault; and the strong columns intended for the work were, at an early hour, assembled in the advanced trenches, all in admirable order, and furnished with precise instructions.

"The mortars maintained an unremitting fire until the moment appointed. The very moment the last volley was discharged the storming-party of Zouaves rushed over the thirty paces before them, and were in the work before the Russians knew what had happened. It was stated that this party lost but eleven men in entering the work. Other troops advanced rapidly to the support of the storming-party; a bridge was formed by rolling up five ladders with planks lashed to them; a communication was at once commenced between the advanced trench and the bridge; brigade after brigade passed over; the redoubt was at once occupied by the storming-party; and thus the Malakoff—and, with it, Sebastopol—was won. The few Russians remaining in the works made a desperate resistance. Many gallant attempts were made by Russian columns to ascend the steep slope in the rear to regain the lost work, but the road was narrow, difficult and obstructed, the position strong and the French in force. All their furious efforts were in vain, and the Malakoff remained in the possession of those who had so gallantly and skillfully won it.

"With regard to the final retreat [of the Russians] to the north side it can only be said that a personal examination of the locality merely confirms its necessity, as well as the impression so generally entertained that it was the finest operation of the war. So admirably was it carried out that not a straggler remained behind; a few men so severely wounded as to be unfit for rough and hurried transportation were the sole ghastly human trophies that remained to the allies.

"The retreat, being a more difficult operation than the assault, may be worthy of higher admiration; but the Russian retreat to the north side, and the French assault upon the Malakoff, must each be regarded as a masterpiece of its kind, deserving the closest study. It is difficult to imagine what point in either can be criticised, for both evinced consummate skill, discipline, coolness and courage."

The closing portion of the sketch has a direct application to the United States system of defense. It is important and interesting enough to bear reproduction :

"It is believed that a calm consideration of the events so hastily and imperfectly narrated in the preceding pages, must lead all unprejudiced persons among our countrymen to a firm conviction on two vital points :

"1st. That our system of permanent coast defenses is a wise and proper one, which ought to be completed and armed with the least possible delay.

"2d. That mere individual courage can not suffice to overcome the forces that would be brought against us, were we involved in an European war ; but that such courage must be rendered manageable by discipline, and directed by that consummate and mechanical military skill which can only be acquired by a course of education, instituted for the special purpose, and by long habit.

"In the day of sailing-vessels, the successful siege of Sebastopol would have been impossible. It is evident that the Russians did not appreciate the advantages afforded by steamers, and were unprepared to sustain a siege.

"This same power of steam would enable European nations to disembark upon our shores even a larger force than that which finally encamped around Sebastopol. To resist such an attack, should it ever be made, our cities and harbors must be fortified, and these fortifications must be provided with guns, ammunition, and instructed artillerists. To repel the advance of such an army into the interior, it is not enough to trust to the number of brave but undisciplined men that we can bring to bear against it.

"An invading army of fifteen thousand or twenty thousand men could easily be crushed by the unremitting attacks of superior numbers ; but when it comes to the case of more than one hundred thousand disciplined veterans, the very multitude brought to bear against them works its own destruction, because, if without discipline and instruction, they can not be handled, and are in their own way. We can not afford a Moscow campaign.

"Our regular army never can, and perhaps never ought, to be large enough to provide for all the contingencies that may

arise; but it should be as large as its ordinary avocations in the defense of the frontier will justify; the number of officers and non-commissioned officers should be unusually large, to provide for a sudden increase; and the greatest possible care should be bestowed upon the instruction of the special arms of the artillery and engineer troops. The militia and volunteer system should be placed upon some tangible and effective basis; instructors furnished them from the regular army, and all possible means taken to spread sound military information among them.

"In the vicinity of our sea-coast fortifications, it would be well to provide a sufficient number of volunteer companies with the means of instruction in heavy artillery, detailing officers of the regular artillery as instructors, who should, at the same time, be in charge of, and responsible for, the guns and material.

"In time of war, or where war is imminent, *local* companies of regular artillery might easily be enlisted for short terms of service, or for the war, in sea-coast towns. The same thing might advantageously be carried into effect, on a small scale, in times of peace."

This was dated January 14th, 1857. How wise its admonitions read five years later, when our relations to Great Britain promised war with that great power! How helpless the Union found its armies when, at the bugle-note of alarm, they gathered around its capital! The words of the young Captain were fearfully verified in the sad disaster which befell the *undisciplined* host, in its first great battle; and the nation then awoke, not only to a fuller knowledge of the strength of the foe it had to meet, but also to a realization of the need of *discipline*, to direct the five hundred thousand men under arms in its defense. The first disaster came with a crushing blow, carrying with it, not only a thousand lives, but also filling with mortification the patriotic American heart that such a calamity should have come to its arms, from such a cause. It was a dear lesson, but it produced good fruits.

The third report made by the Commission came from Major Mordecai. Its *specialité* was ordnance and military organization, in which it was very complete. It was one of the ablest expositions of modern gunnery and construction

which had been given to the student and soldier ; while, as a popular treatise, it possessed extreme interest. It also contained a translation of the report of the French War Minister to the Emperor, on the administrative arrangements for the war in the East. Also a full treatise on the small-arms of the several European nations, particularly referring to the celebrated rifled arms then recently introduced. The last section contained a translation, at length, of the complete work of Captain J. Schön, on rifled infantry arms.

It will be seen by this record of the character of the reports submitted by the three Commissioners, not only how well chosen were the men for the duty, but what an important influence their expositions must have had upon the American profession of arms. We truly have had no "system" in our military organization—having been left much to the exigencies of the hour. Our people are so decidedly averse to a standing army—disliking its aristocratic tendency and its expense—that there has, for many years, been a growing tendency to actual military disorganization. Had it not been for the claims of our western frontiers to protection, it is doubtful if our "army" would have had an existence. The Southern Rebellion found us, as a nation, powerless against the uprising. The forts which had cost the country vast sums to construct, were barely held by a corporal's guard, and their seizure, with all their fine armaments, was easily effected by wretched mobs, led by half sober leaders, who knew the art of war chiefly from having long worn a bowie-knife. The arsenals, forts, and navy-yards of the Government should have been protected by at least fifty thousand men, and our countrymen learned their mistake only too late. The future history of the country must tell a different story :—a "standing army," of from fifty to seventy-five thousand men, must become one of the settled material forces of the Government, if in time of peace we would be prepared for war. Democratic or not, such a force of trained and ever ready men is to become one of the necessities of a wise protection of our exposed and widely extended territory.

## CHAPTER VI.

RESIGNATION OF COMMISSION IN THE UNITED STATES SERVICE—ACCEPTS THE POSITION OF VICE-PRESIDENT AND CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD—HIS EXCELLENT MANAGEMENT—IS CHOSEN GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT, ETC., OF THE OHIO AND MISSISSIPPI RAILROAD—RESOLVES TO ANSWER THE CALL TO ARMS—IS MADE MAJOR-GENERAL OF THE OHIO TROOPS—THE DEPARTMENT OF OHIO CREATED—HIS COMMAND THEREIN—ORGANIZATION OF THE WESTERN VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN—PROCLAMATIONS TO THE PEOPLE AND TROOPS.

MCCLELLAN returned to duty at West Point after the return from Europe in the spring of 1857. His mere routine duties becoming irksome, and no prospect offering of serving his country in an active capacity, he resigned his commission in the United States army to accept the position of Chief Engineer and Vice-President of the Illinois Central Railway—one of the most important and extensive railway corporations in this country of gigantic enterprises. This company, possessing a landed interest such as no earthly potentate could call his own, required, in its care and development, a degree of executive skill which few men possessed. Casting about for the proper person to assume the trust, the New York capitalists found in Captain McClellan the man for their wants, and, after negotiations extending through the fall of 1856, the arrangement was consummated, giving him the position named. He resigned from the army to enter at once upon duty.

The service with the Illinois Central Railroad extended to August, 1860—thirty-one months, during which time his entire energies and abilities were bestowed upon both the physical and financial interests of the vast corporation. His energy, like the spirit of vitality in the human body, electrified the body corporate to a remarkable degree. Town-sites, highways, depôts, manufactories, mills, along the line and upon the lands of the company, became such *features* of “the West” as to challenge the “march of empire” and bid it stay there. The prosperity of Illinois, in consequence, grew to be a source of general comment, and its vast prairies became the dwelling-places of the invading tide of emigrants from the old States and from Europe.

The success of his management\* pointed him out as the man to save from bankruptcy and ruin that great enterprise, the Ohio and Mississippi Railway†—an “air line,” six foot gauge railroad from Cincinnati to St. Louis. After various abortive attempts to render the road any thing but a constant loss, its general superintendency was committed to him, September 1st, 1860. In November, the same year, he assumed also the Presidency of the Eastern Division. Taking into consideration the eminent talent which had been brought to bear in the Board of Directors of the road, the mere election to these responsible trusts is a sufficient evidence of his own great administrative ability. The history of commercial enterprise in this country does not present a parallel case in which one so young was given the management of such important trusts.

The alarmed state of the country during the fall and winter of 1860–61 allowed little opportunity for carrying forward his schemes in regard to the road. He saw, with a prophet's eye, that war was not far distant; and, though a Democrat—opposed in politics to the incoming administration—though a warm personal friend of Jefferson Davis,‡ and imbued with much of the “Southern” sentiment which ever has prevailed in both army and navy—he, at an early moment, resolved to stand by the Constitution and the Union to the last. At the first call to arms he was prepared to respond. Although his relations with the railway under his charge were of an extremely delicate and responsible nature, with the ardor of a true citizen he allowed no claim to stand in the way of service to his country, in its hour of peril. He tendered his resignation to the Receiver in May,

\* Documents on file at the company's office in New York city attest the high consideration in which he was held by the directory.

† The documents attendant upon the negotiation for him to accept the presidency of the road are on file at the company's office, 88 Wall street, New York.

‡ Among the duties confided to McClellan by Davis as Secretary of War during the Pierce administration, was one named by the press as “a secret service to the West Indies.” The nature of that service (performed in the fall of 1854) has not transpired; if any records of it exist they are in the secret archives of the War Department. It is intimated, however, that, under cover of an attempt to purchase one of the Bahamas there was a subtle scheme of aggrandizement looking toward Cuba. As McClellan acted under instructions, it is not probable that he was made aware of the ultimate objects of his personal and unobserved survey of harbors and strategic positions among the islands.

but the resignation was not accepted; he still is President of the road.

In the first call for volunteers Ohio was required to furnish thirteen regiments, and the Governor of that State was authorized to commission its own officers. By legislative act of April 23d, 1861, the Governor was authorized to commission one Major-General and three Brigadiers. McClellan was immediately named Major-General. From the one hundred and one candidates for that post of honor he was chosen by the Governor in the exercise of a wise discretion which cast aside partisan claims and looked only to supreme fitness. The appointment was at once satisfactory and popular, and McClellan entered upon one of the most severe and trying ordeals of his career—that of bringing an army immediately into the field chiefly composed of men who had never seen service, while arms, equipments, quartermaster arrangements, clothing, etc., were almost entirely to be created.

“Within two days after receiving the President’s proclamation of April 15th,” Governor Dennison said, “the First and Second Regiments of Ohio Volunteers were on their way to Washington.” This betrays the spirit which prevailed in Ohio. Out of such a people it was only a question of a few weeks to create an army. The remainder of the thirteen regiments went into camp near Columbus for equipment, organization and drill; and were, in the course of two months, reëntered as three years volunteers. The nine regiments specially authorized by the Legislature for a reserve were soon called into service, for McClellan had resolved to push the war into the enemy’s own country, and the Western Virginia campaign followed. It was these nine regiments which McClellan first commanded. He called upon Government for officers from the regular army, and soon found himself in possession of troops of which any commander might well be proud.

Governor Dennison, in his message (January 6th, 1861), says:—“I united with the Governors of Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois, in asking that the States of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois be joined with Western Pennsylvania and Western Virginia in a military department, to be under the command of Major-General McClellan, who would be enabled, with the

force derived from these States, to preserve navigation on the Ohio river, and remove the danger of raids from its borders." This request was seconded by the General Government, the department created, and McClellan placed in chief command therein.

The Western Virginia campaign was quickly matured. The quick eye of the military man saw and appreciated the needs of a rapid service in expelling the oppressors from the region west of the Blue Ridge—thus to instate the new loyal government then determined upon by the Wheeling Convention. The arrangements for the campaign were matured during May. On the 26th of that month the following proclamation was issued :

"HEAD-QUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF OHIO, }  
"CINCINNATI, May 26, 1861. }

*To the Union Men of Western Virginia :*

"VIRGINIANS:—The General Government has long enough endured the machinations of a few factious rebels in your midst. Armed traitors have in vain endeavored to deter you from expressing your loyalty at the polls. Having failed in this infamous attempt to deprive you of the exercise of your dearest rights, they now seek to inaugurate a reign of terror, and thus force you to yield to their schemes, and submit to the yoke of the traitorous conspiracy dignified by the name of the Southern Confederacy. They are destroying the property of citizens of your State, and ruining your magnificent railways. The General Government has heretofore carefully abstained from sending troops across the Ohio, or even from posting them along its banks, although frequently urged by many of your prominent citizens to do so.

"It determined to await the result of the State election, desirous that no one might be able to say that the slightest effort had been made from this side to influence the free expression of your opinions, although the many agencies brought to bear upon you by the rebels were well known. You have now shown, under the most adverse circumstances, that the great mass of the people of Western Virginia are true and loyal to that beneficent Government under which we and our fathers have lived so long. As soon as the result of the election was known, the traitors commenced their work of destruction. The General Government can not close its ears to the demand you have made for assistance. I have ordered troops to cross the river. They come as your friends and brothers; as enemies only to armed rebels who are preying upon you. Your homes, your families and your property are safe under our protection. All your rights shall be religiously respected.

"Notwithstanding all that has been said by the traitors to induce you to believe our advent among you will be signalized by an interference with your slaves, understand one thing clearly: Not only will we abstain from all such interference, but we will, on the contrary, with an iron hand, crush any attempt at insurrection on their part.

"Now that we are in your midst, I call upon you to fly to arms and support the General Government; sever the connection that binds you to traitors; proclaim to the world that the faith and loyalty so long boasted by the Old Dominion are still preserved in Western Virginia, and that you remain true to the Stars and Stripes.

G. B. McCLELLAN,

"Major-General Commanding."

To his soldiers he addressed a proclamation couched in language calculated to reassure the suspicious and sensitive people that the rights and property of those loyal to the Government were to be respected. He said:

"SOLDIERS:—You are ordered to cross the frontier and to enter on the soil of Virginia. Your mission is to restore peace and confidence; to protect the majesty of the law and to secure our brethren from the grasp of armed traitors. I place under the safeguard of your honor the persons and property of the Virginians. I know you will respect their feelings and all their rights, and will preserve the strictest discipline.

"Remember, that each one of you holds in his keeping the honor of Ohio and the Union. If you are called to overcome armed opposition I know your courage is equal to the task. Remember that your only *foes* are *armed traitors*. Show mercy even to them, when in your power, for many of them are misguided.

"When, under your protection, the loyal men of Western Virginia have been enabled to organize and form until they can protect themselves, you can return to your homes with the proud satisfaction of having preserved a gallant people from destruction."

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE WESTERN VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN.

THE Western Virginia campaign opened simultaneously with the issue of the proclamation. Sunday night Colonel Kelly, in command of the troops at Camp Carlisle, near Wheeling, gave the word for a forward movement. Early Monday morning the troops poured into Wheeling and embarked on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad for Grafton. At Warrington the railway bridges over Buffalo creek were found to be destroyed. After various delays, and greatly to the terror of the secessionists, the federal troops occupied Grafton on Thursday—the rebel troops in occupancy of the place having previously withdrawn to Philippi, where they made a stand, in strong force. The attack on Philippi was pressed with rapidity. Brigadier-General Thomas A. Morris was ordered by McClellan to surprise the enemy by a forced march. On the night of June 2d two divisions were started from Grafton to Philippi—twenty-four miles distant. One division, commanded by Colonel Kelly, moved east by way of railroad to Thornton—thence by march to the point of attack. It consisted of the First Virginia and parts of the Sixteenth Ohio and Seventh Indiana regiments. The second division, under command of Colonel E. Dumont, proceeded by way of Webster. It consisted of eight companies of the Seventh Indiana, four companies of the Sixth Indiana, seven companies of the Fourteenth Ohio. The surprise was complete. The enemy, under Colonel G. A. Porterfield, numbering one thousand nine hundred and forty men, were driven from their camp, deserting large amounts of equipage, arms, stores, etc., in their rout, and leaving fifteen dead behind them. Colonel Kelly, in the assault, was wounded. Colonel Lander served the artillery in Colonel Dumont's division, and opened the attack in front. The design comprehended the "bagging" of the entire force of the enemy, but the dreadful storm which raged during the night, and the almost pitch darkness which followed, prevented Colonel Kelly from reaching the enemy's rear in season to cut off his retreat.

From Philippi the enemy fell back toward Beverly, taking position on Laurel Hill, which they proceeded to fortify. While steps were being taken to crowd the campaign in this section, McClellan was operating in another direction, with the evident design of reaching Winchester, in the rear of Harper's Ferry, in order to cut off the enemy's retreat from that strong position, as well as to cut off reinforcements for their army operating at Laurel Hill and Rich Mountain. The success of his strategy proved him to possess a mind for command, and directed all eyes to him as one of the ablest Generals in the field. General Scott, it is understood, simply expressed his wishes in the matter, leaving McClellan to pursue his own course.

Of the operations which succeeded the occupation of Philippi to the defeat of the rebel General Garnett—a defeat which relieved all of the northern portion of Western Virginia from the presence of the enemy—we may avail ourselves of a narrative prepared by one who participated in the campaign :

“The rebel forces, after the battle of Philippi, lay at Laurel Hill, near Beverly, in a strong position, which commanded our road to the southern portion of the State, and in which they had fortified themselves with great labor and care. From this point they had repeatedly threatened us with attack, and our officers felt very eager to repeat the action by which the campaign had been so successfully opened at Philippi. A plan was formed, therefore, to move down from our head-quarters at Grafton and capture or destroy the enemy. The fortifications at Laurel Hill had, however, greatly strengthened a position of the most advantageous kind, and the attack was not to be lightly undertaken.”

“On the side of the Laurel Mountain lies a fine, broad and cleared plateau, which afforded ample room for an encampment and a parade-ground in the rear. The slopes in front down to the valley were fortified with a more extended system of intrenchments, which our men are now engaged in destroying, and which were so complete as almost to defy a direct attack by any force at our command. It was resolved, therefore, to combine with the direct assault a movement in the enemy's rear, for which the shape of the country afforded

peculiar facilities. Stretching away, north-east and south-west, lay the western range of the Alleghanies, impassable without great difficulty for an army, and even then passable only at certain points. At the foot of the mountain was the main road, which gives access to Southern Virginia on this western slope of the range. By this route alone could the enemy receive reinforcements or supplies, and this fact determined the scheme of operations. To occupy his attention by a direct attack in front, while another body of our forces should go around into his rear, and cut off communication with his base, would place him at our mercy, and enable us to assail him in his intrenchments with an overpowering force and in both directions at once, or else to starve him out, should it be deemed best not to conclude the affair by a direct engagement.

“The plan thus formed was executed by the two divisions of General McClellan’s army. The main body of ten thousand, led by himself, went round by Clarksburg and Buckhannon, on the west of the enemy; while the other and smaller division of four thousand, under General Morris, made the direct attack, which was to hold the rebels in check on the north, and occupy them while the former force should be getting into their rear.

“General McClellan, after a sharp skirmish at Buckhannon, approached the rear of the enemy, which, however, he found strongly fortified at Rich Mountain, and defended by a force of some two or three thousand under Colonel Pegram. Sending General Rosecrans with a force of some three thousand to assail them in the rear, while he was himself to attack them in front, he hoped to capture the enemy entirely; but some want of coöperation took place which interfered with the completeness of the result. General Rosecrans reached the rear of the mountains, which was held by some three hundred rebels, but did not succeed in communicating to General McClellan the information that he was ready to attack, and the command of McClellan lay inactive for many hours, waiting for this intelligence. Hence, though the attack of Rosecrans was entirely successful upon the small force before him, Colonel Pegram took the alarm, and silently moved off with his main body to join Garnett at Laurel Hill.

He found it impossible, however, to do so, and after lying in the woods for two days, utterly destitute of provisions, was obliged to surrender with all those of his troops who had not succeeded in getting away. This successful move captured or killed about one thousand or perhaps twelve hundred rebels.

"Meanwhile, the division of General Morris was cautiously making its way down upon the enemy from Grafton and Philippi. The command of the advance brigade was given by General Morris to his chief engineer officer, Captain Benham, of the United States Topographical Engineers, an officer of great experience and skill, whose judgment had before been tested by the conduct of several difficult operations. Captain Benham had thoroughly explored and mapped the country, and his accurate delineations of the topography had given essential aid in the planning of the expedition. When General McClellan's order was received to march upon Laurel Hill, Captain Benham arranged the plan of the march, and started at two A. M. on the 7th of July. By skillfully availing himself of the peculiarities of the country, he avoided the necessity of thrice fording a stream, as had been supposed necessary by the commanding General, in order to avoid defiles where effective resistance might be offered; and thus brought the army to its designated position some two hours earlier than would have been possible otherwise, to the complete surprise of the enemy. Here a position was chosen at Beelington, on the opposite side of the valley from Laurel Hill, and within rifle-shot of the enemy's intrenchments; and, notwithstanding repeated attacks and skirmishes with the enemy, it was successfully fortified and held till the approach of the other column.

"Upon the overthrow of Colonel Pegram at Rich Mountain, General Garnett, the rebel commander, began to understand the extent of his danger, and made haste to extricate himself from a position in which he could no longer fight with advantage, nor even retreat with success. He left his intrenchments, and moved at once south toward Beverly, hoping, by great expedition, to reach that place before General McClellan should arrive. But by the time he had got within a few miles of it the fugitives from Pegram's corps informed him that the effort was hopeless. Beverly was occupied in

force by the Union troops. His only remaining resource was to turn upon his steps, and retrace his path to Leedsville, where another turnpike road branched off to the north-east, on the other side of Laurel Mountain. Pursuing this route with all speed, he passed Leedsville the same afternoon, and pressed on along the base of the mountains down the Cheat river, hoping to find some practicable path across the mountains into the valley of Virginia. Throwing away, therefore, all superfluous baggage, he fled rapidly, and soon turned off from the main road into a narrow path along the mountains, in which pursuit might be more easily obstructed. Here he closed the narrow path after him, and filled every defile through which he passed, by felling the largest trees into and across it.

“His flight, however, which took place on Thursday evening, was ascertained on Friday morning by some of our men at Laurel Hill; and on word being sent to General Morris, he gave immediate orders for pursuit, though his force was greatly inferior to that of the enemy. Following with the somewhat larger portion himself, he sent Captain Benham forward with the advance division, giving him orders to press forward after the rebels as far as Leedsville, secure the ford at that place, and await his arrival. Captain Benham set out instantly; at first with caution, for it might be only a feint to draw us on into an attack; but on reaching the intrenchments they were found entirely deserted, and the Captain had the pleasure to be the first officer within the abandoned works. The command pressed on to Leedsville and there halted, according to orders. This order to halt was unfortunate; had Captain Benham been authorized to advance further, a more effectual pursuit might have been made; but held back by positive directions, he was compelled to wait—his men under arms and ready to resume the pursuit—till General Morris arrived at ten P. M. It was then too late to move till morning; the men must have some rest; and they were allowed a brief slumber of three hours, from eleven in the evening till two A. M., when the pursuit was eagerly resumed.”

The pursuit was a memorable one. Captain Benham led, with one thousand eight hundred men, composed of Ohio and Indiana troops. General Morris followed with the rear. Up

and down the mountains, through defiles and over rugged ridges, everywhere impeded by the obstructions thrown in the way by the flying enemy—the pursuit was pressed with an ardor which was not to be repressed. Many men fell behind, exhausted with hunger and exertion.

“At length, after crossing one of the branches of Cheat river, we saw before us the provision-train of the rebels at rest; but a foolish boy firing his musket set it in motion again in full retreat, and brought out two heavy regiments to protect it, before our first regiment could reach the ford. This caused a further pursuit of three or four miles, when the train was again overtaken half across the stream; and here General Garnett made a vigorous stand for its defense.

“The locality afforded a fine position to repel our assault. Cheat river, in one of its numerous bends, winds here round a bluff of fifty or sixty feet high, the lower portion of which is covered with a dense growth of laurel, through which it is almost impossible to penetrate. On the top of this bluff he placed his cannon, which swept our approach to the ford; while his troops were drawn up in line—some two thousand in number—on either side of their guns, in a line some four hundred feet in length, with the remainder of his force within a mile. They were well protected from our fire by a fence, which showed only their heads above it, and by numerous trees which afforded them cover.

“On coming up, Colonel Dumont’s men, the Seventh Indiana regiment, pressed into the stream, crossed it, and attempted to scale the bluff in front, in face of the enemy’s fire of musketry and artillery, but the steepness of the ascent rendered it impossible. When Captain Benham came up he found the men climbing the steep ascent almost on their faces; and, seeing the difficulty of success, he ordered them down again into the stream. On our right was a depression in the bluff, just where a ravine came down to the river, and he directed them to try the ascent there. They did so, but found the way so steep, and so obstructed by the dense cedar roots, that they soon found this, too, impossible. Captain Benham then ordered the regiment to cross the stream, and, keeping in its bed, immediately under the bluff, to pass down it to our left, where they could gain the road. This happy

maneuver was immediately executed. The men passed down the whole front of the enemy, protected so effectually by the steepness of the bank from his fire that they emerged on the right of the rebels without losing a man; and as the head of the column showed itself on their flank the rebels fled, leaving one of their guns and a number of killed, wounded and prisoners in our hands.

"About a quarter of a mile in advance the river makes another turn; and here the enemy again attempted a stand. General Garnett himself bravely stood, and tried to gather his men around him, but in vain. He then begged for thirty skirmishers to go back with him and pick off our officers—as we were informed by our prisoners subsequently. A few did return with him to the bank of the stream; but, as we came up, they fired a volley and again fled, and left him with only a single companion. Our men ran forward to the bank of the stream, where a group of three cedars gave them a slight cover, and fired upon the fugitives. General Garnett was standing with his back to us, trying in vain to rally his men, when he received a Minié ball just on the left of the spine. It made a terrible wound, piercing the heart and coming out at the right nipple, and the poor General threw up his arms, and with his single companion fell dead. Our men passed over, and finding by the straps on his shoulder that he was an officer of rank, sent word back immediately to the commanding officer. Captain Benham was still at the bluff, caring for the wounded and directing the removal of the cannon, but on receiving the news he at once rode forward to the spot, and himself first identified the body as that of General Garnett, late Major Garnett, U. S. A.

"The body, which had remained undisturbed, was carried, by Captain Benham's order, into a small log-house, where the General's money was taken from his pockets and counted, and, with his watch and sword, preserved for his family; his field telescope, an elegant opera-glass, a large map of Virginia, and some small sketches of our own positions near Grafton, became the legitimate trophies of the conqueror."

The rout of the enemy was utter. Of about five thousand troops with which Garnett had left his intrenchments, only about two thousand escaped, in a disorganized and demoralized

condition, to the east. For several days small parties came in, exhausted and hungry, to accept such terms as the Unionists were willing to give—terms which were then deemed humane and proper, but which afterward were regretted, as most of those released on parole, or on their taking the oath of allegiance to the Federal Government and laws, were soon in arms again against their country.\*

This defeat of Garnett was the salvation of the Union movement in Western Virginia, and left the Wheeling Legislature to pursue in peace its proceedings of reorganization of the State.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### CONCLUSION.

THE disaster which befell the federal forces at Bull Run so changed the aspect of affairs as to make it apparent that an almost entire reorganization of the military was necessary. Flushed with the confidence of superiority in numbers, our people (and Congressmen in particular) believed it only necessary to march upon the enemy to secure victory. Against this impatience and overweening confidence General Scott struggled. The old soldier and wise leader conceived time to be necessary in order to render his vast army of volunteers soldiers in the true sense of the word. While he ordered as rapid a prosecution of the campaign as seemed consistent with a safe progress, he conceived it premature to press the advance upon Richmond and down the Mississippi. But, even his prudence could not withstand the desire for an advance pressed upon him by Congressmen and the press of the country, and the movement was ordered. McDowell pushed forward to assail the enemy in front, while Patterson, with a force of twelve thousand strong—having already taken a strategic position at Harper's Ferry for the combined move-

\* This infamous disregard of oaths and honor was happily illustrated in the sarcasm of a Captain in one of the Ohio regiments. A rattlesnake was caught alive on the mountains and brought into camp. After tiring of its presence its captor asked the Captain what he should do with the reptile. "Oh, swear him and let him go!" was the curt reply.

ment—was to assail Johnson's force (which really constituted the enemy's left wing), thus to prevent Beauregard's reinforcement, as well as to threaten his rear. The history of the country has to record that McDowell won a victory; and then, at the last hour, when the rebel Commander-in-Chief had ordered a retreat,\* lost it by the arrival on the field of all of Johnson's forces, whom Patterson had not only not engaged but had not even pursued. This reinforcement turned a victory into a disastrous defeat. The federal soldiers, exhausted with their two days of terrible fighting, became panic-stricken from some cause only known in the calendar of mysteries, and fled to the Potomac intrenchments in a state of disorder which really resulted in the total demoralization of the army—then largely composed of the three-months troops, whose terms of enlistment were rapidly expiring.

In its dismay at such a reverse, the country looked around for a leader, young and strong, who should enter the field as *acting* commander, and, by a direct contact with men and officers, bring order and efficiency once more out of that chaos. All eyes turned to McClellan, and, with General Scott's hearty assent, he was called to the responsible post. August 1st saw him at the capital, and not a week had passed before the stringent measures of a strict disciplinarian began to be felt. The first steps were to compel officers to return to their posts—then to inspire them with the spirit of military obedience and promptness toward superiors which they were only too eager to exact of their own men. This was a necessary step for the rigid discipline and accountability which, ere long, followed; and the country witnessed, with pleasure and a feeling of relief, an army grow up under the General-in-Chief's hands to which it would be safe to trust the fate of the campaign on the Potomac.

McClellan continued his labors of reorganization, discipline and general direction of the army of the Potomac up to November 1st, when the resignation of Lieutenant-General Scott left him the virtual acting Commander-in-Chief of the entire Union forces. The President is, by the Constitution, Commander-in-Chief; the Secretary of War is his next in authority; but the direction of the forces in the field is left, almost

\* See Beauregard's speech at a dinner in Richmond, in the fall of 1861.

unrestrictedly, to the General-in-Chief. That McClellan has fulfilled, in a complete manner, the expectations of the country is conceded. A few factionists, never so happy as when assailing character or exciting animosities, inveighed strongly against the policy pursued by the General-in-Chief; but, wise enough to plan and carry forward a mighty campaign, he was, also, patient enough to withstand, without a murmur, the attacks of the "On to Richmond" factionists. His final triumph has been too complete to render worthy of notice the fault-finding of newspaper paragraphists, whose self-assurance is, alas! one of the leading characteristics of much American journalism.

*Francis Pickens*  
*N York*  
*2050*

THE END.

*P. B. Diggins*

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